

REALSIMPLE

LIFE MADE EASIER

SPECIAL
15TH
ANNIVERSARY
ISSUE

the ultimate life handbook

ORGANIZE + COOK + CLEAN + WORK + DRESS + CONNECT
1,001 WAYS TO LIVE BETTER EVERY DAY



FEATURING
a life-changing
organizing
makeover

**TEAR-OUT
TIPPING CHART**

BEST-RATED RECIPES

**STAIN
REMOVAL 101**

**OUR 67 FAVORITE
ROAD-TESTED
PRODUCTS**

REALSIMPLE

life/home/body/soul

PREMIERE
ISSUE COVER
APRIL
2000

THEN AND NOW
Photographer
Martyn Thomson
shot *Real Simple's*
very first cover
(here) and anni-
versary cover
(front). (With
roses, of course.
The traditional
flower for 15th
anniversaries.)



3

STEPS TO BUILDING THE RIGHT PLAN FOR YOUR SOMEDAY



1. FIND OUT IF YOU'RE SAVING ENOUGH.

It's a simple question, but a critically important one. Together, we can take a look at what you want your retirement life to look like. Then we'll look at the progress you've made, how you're invested, and what you can do to keep up the good work.



2. MAKE SMART DECISIONS FOR YOUR MONEY.

Seems obvious, right? But as you know, deciding on investments is not an easy process. We can help you navigate through a broad range of mutual funds, ETFs, stocks, bonds, and more, all to help you choose the right ones for you—and your someday.



3. CHECK IN.

No matter where you are in your retirement planning, periodic reviews can help you stay on track. Remember, your life and your goals will change over time. It's important to make sure your money keeps pace.

EVERY SOMEDAY NEEDS A PLANSM



BECAUSE SOMEDAY

I want to pass down
more than possessions. |



Alert:
Fidelity Meeting



Attachment:
Retirement Plan



Reminder:
Today

SAVE

Every someday needs a planSM.

Get a clear view of yours when you move your old 401(k).

- One-on-one guidance focused on your goals, not ours
- A consolidated view of how your investments are really doing
- The expertise to help you choose from a broad range of investment options

**Move your old 401(k) to a Fidelity Rollover IRA,
and get control over your own personal someday.**



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Be sure to consider all your available options and the applicable fees and features of each before moving your retirement assets.

Keep in mind that investing involves risk. The value of your investment will fluctuate over time and you may gain or lose money.

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#mysomeday

Thoughts



“The past suggests what can be, not what must be. It shows not all of what is necessary, but some of what is possible.”

HOWARD ZINN, *THE POLITICS OF HISTORY*

Photograph by James Wojcik

If you love facials, DIY.

Now comes soap just for sonic cleansing. Turns a face wash into a facial.

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STEP INTO SPRING WITH DSW

Shoes say something unique about style, self-expression, and how to take on every day. This month, stay on top of the season's activities by having the right shoes for any occasion. Use these ideas from **DSW**, then get social and **#SAYSOMETHINGGREAT** about your favorite footwear!

1 Begin with a basic: nude heels or ballet flats that match your skin tone and go with everything.



7 Kite-flying with the kids? Kicks are in order!

8 Bring on the blooms with waterproof clogs in the garden.

9 Rain boots inspire puddle jumping and rainbow spotting.



CHARLES BY CHARLES DAVID IMPERIAL, \$59.95

4 Season's first sail? Go bold in boat shoes.

5 Spring weddings mean dress-me-up pumps...

6 ...and receptions mean jeweled sandals.

14 Hit favorite trails with the family. (New hiking boots for all!)



NINE WEST SELENA, \$59.95

24 GALLERY OPENINGS
23 KIDS' ARTS & CRAFTS



BCBGENERATION ANNYYA, \$49.95

26



27 Weekend road trips require versatility: think mocs or flat sandals.

28 / 29 Go with a classic bootie for the long weekend with your in-laws...but make sure it's casual enough for a Sunday matinee.



CROWN VINTAGE TABITHA, \$69.95

30

Yoga class (because sometimes feet need a shoe break).



19 Late-season snowfall = last chance to don furry snow boots.

20 Yard sales have begun; grab your best walk-around slip-ons.



NEW BALANCE 515, \$59.95

Longer days bring longer afternoons chasing the kids!

Mornings still chilly? Cozy up with coffee and fleece-lined slippers.

3 Show up in lace-ups for your child's spring school play.

4 Farmers' market produce is even fresher in chic sneakers.



CONVERSE ALL STAR LOW TOP



5

BIKES ARE BACK!



11. Play dates—now outside at the playground.

Spring Break! Celebrate a little sun in sandals.



13

Brunch alfresco with girlfriends always calls for wedges.



SHARE YOUR GREATEST SHOE MOMENTS!
#SAYSOMETHINGGREAT

FOR MORE TIPS VISIT **DSW.COM**.

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YOU
SAY SOMETHING
GREAT
DSW
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BCBG PARIS JAZE \$59.95 (COMPARE AT \$89) / CONVERSE ALL STAR HIGH-TOP



CAPTURE THE MOMENT

At last, hibernation mode ends. As blades of grass peek through, and delicate blooms unfurl like the subtle notes in Ghirardelli® Intense Dark chocolate, further indulge the senses with its complex, sophisticated and slow-melting sensations.

7:06 P.M. FRIDAY

SERENITY CALLING: Friends urged you onto the open waters, and you're glad they did. Wind in your hair, sun on your face, crack a smile and make the moment last with Ghirardelli® Intense Dark Sea Salt Soiree®.



4:17 P.M. SATURDAY

GARDEN VIEW: You planted the seeds, and worked the soil. Now, sink into relax mode and enjoy your own private sanctuary with Ghirardelli® Intense Dark Midnight Reverie® 86% cacao chocolate.

2:26 P.M. SUNDAY

ART IN THE AFTERNOON: So much to soak in on a gallery-hopping excursion. Get seduced by the flowing inspiration and steal away to savor it with Ghirardelli® Intense Dark Twilight Delight® 72% cacao chocolate.



INTENSE DARK

SAVOR EACH MOMENT. Ghirardelli.com/IntenseDark

Savor the dark




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the Simple List 2000 vs. 2015

IS LIFE SIMPLER OR MORE COMPLICATED SINCE *REAL SIMPLE*'S LAUNCH, 15 YEARS AGO? YES.

5

FLYING

THEN: The Transportation Security Administration didn't exist. (It was formed in 2002.) Airlines and private companies handled security. You could pack that 64-ounce bulk bottle of shampoo in your carry-on. You didn't take off your shoes—or pay for a checked bag. (That started in 2008.) Continental even served free meals on domestic flights until 2010.

NOW: Yes, your 3.4-ounce toiletries should still be in a one-quart zip-top bag. And that weird snack box will be \$7, please.



4

TAKING PHOTOS

THEN: DIGITAL CAMERAS WERE STILL RELATIVELY NEW IN 2000. A NIKON COOLPIX WITH 3 MEGAPIXELS SOLD FOR \$1,000. WONDERING IF YOUR EYES WERE CLOSED IN THE PHOTO? YOUR PRINTS WILL BE READY NEXT WEEK.

NOW: A 16-MEGAPIXEL NIKON COOLPIX IS \$130. BUT WHO NEEDS IT WHEN YOU HAVE A SMARTPHONE? INSTEAD OF PRINTING SHOTS, YOU FILTER AND POST THEM. MORE THAN 70 MILLION ARE UPLOADED TO INSTAGRAM DAILY.



Written by

N. Jamiyla Chisholm

Illustrations by

Peter Oumanski

2

WATCHING TV

THEN: Push up or down arrow on remote at scheduled date and time. Watch.

NOW: Must-see TV 2.0. According to the broadcasting nonprofit group TVB, the percentage of TV households with wired cable has dropped from 70 to 57 in the past 15 years. The International Data Corporation, a market-research company, says that 48 million U.S. households now subscribe to at least one streaming video service, like Hulu or Netflix.

3

REMEMBERING A BIRTHDAY

THEN: You had to actually, you know, remember it. Or at least have written it in your Filofax.

NOW: Facebook tells you, iCal reminds you, or an app like Cozi (cozi.com, also owned by Time Inc.) sends you birthday alerts right along with your grocery list.

1

DATING

THEN: Match.com was only five years old; eHarmony launched in 2000. Most likely, you met offline. In person. Imagine that.

NOW: You're spending hours perfecting your profiles and swiping through Tinder (est. 2012), but guess what? According to a 2013 Pew Research Center study, only 5 percent of people in a marriage or a long-term relationship say they met their partners online.



6

"TALKING" ON THE PHONE

THEN: About 97 percent of households had landlines, according to the Pew Research Center. The iPhone was still seven years away. (Remember Nokias? Those were best sellers). To text "hello," you probably had to press 4-4-3-3-5-5-5-5-5-6-6-6.

NOW: With a pig-snout emoji, anything is possible.

7

MAKING COFFEE

THEN: The hardest part was finding a filter for your drip coffeemaker. (One left—hallelujah!)

NOW: It's so much easier! Just pop in a pod! Wait—you like a pour-over method? Oh. You have a Chemex? There's a Filter Folding 101 tutorial on the website? Did you say the coffee grounds need to "bloom"? And this is all happening at 7 A.M.?



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BY VISIBLE LIFT

Andie MacDowell
SAND BEIGE 152

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SKIN TONE*

90%
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IMPERFECTIONS*

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SAW MORE RADIANT SKIN*

84%
SAW APPEARANCE OF
WRINKLES REDUCED*

81%
SAW INSTANTLY
MORE YOUTHFUL SKIN**

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04.2015

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every day

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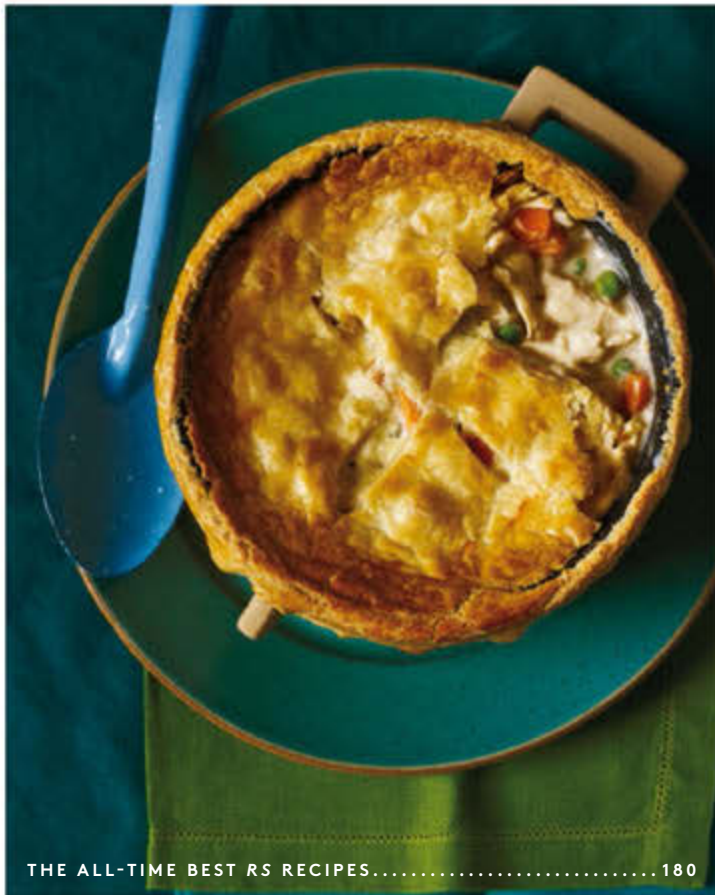
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FROM HIBERNATION TO
Inspiration



pictured:
Liz Claiborne® Home
Arabesque comforter,
part of a 4-piece set
jcp.com/home-collections

JCPenney



est. 1902

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 the wedding registry
at JCPenney
Create yours in store or at jcp.com

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Cover Photograph by Martyn Thompson | Floral Styling by Nicolette Camille | Set Design by Jeffrey W. Miller

▲ SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OUR COVER PHOTOGRAPHERS OVER THE YEARS! OUR SUBSCRIBER COVER TAKES A LOOK BACK.
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ON FACEBOOK
@realsimple

WHAT'S ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU WISH YOU KNEW 15 YEARS AGO?

More than 2,000 of our Facebook fans shared their wisdom.

Erin O Doherty

You are pretty great. You are also really capable. You don't know that now, but you will later. So for now, pretend and don't be afraid to ask the wrong questions.

Amy Park Mincey

Put down your phone and look around. Soak it all up!

Nicole Nelson

Find a man who knows how to load the dishwasher! I'm telling you, if he knows how to load the dishwasher, he's got a ton of other good stuff too!

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WAYS TO MAKE LIFE EASIER—EVERY DAY.



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@PIGGYANDPOLLY)
Just five more minutes please...



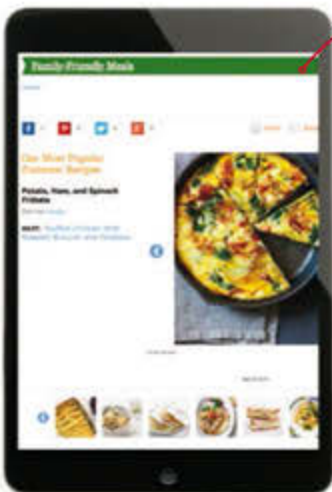
@REAL_SIMPLE (VIA
@HAUTESUCRE)
Nothing like the smell of bacon to wake you up on a lazy Sunday.



@REAL_SIMPLE
(VIA @LIVING
WITHAMY)
This backyard beauty brightened my mood this morning.



@REAL_SIMPLE
Peonies for days...



You'll want to pin these—now!

- The dinner recipes our Pinterest followers are making, like the Potato, Ham, and Spinach Frittata shown at left.
- The most helpful new uses for old things, including favorites like transforming an empty cereal box into a drawer organizer.
- Smart problem-solving products, like a collapsible whisk and a portable iron mat.



FIND IT ALL
HERE
[realsimple.com/
whatsnew](http://realsimple.com/whatsnew).



WHAT OUR EXPERIMENT ABOUT OPTIMISM MEANS FOR YOUR FUTURE.



Prudential recently asked people from around the country to share important events that happened to them in the past, along with ones that might happen in the future. We displayed thousands of their answers and discovered an interesting fact: While the past was an even mix of good and bad, our participants believed that the future would be mostly good.

Behavioral scientists call this “optimism bias,” and it’s a major reason why many people fail to plan for risks they’ll likely face in the future. So talk to your financial professional to learn how Prudential can help you protect against whatever tomorrow may bring. Hope for the best. And plan for the rest.

TALK TO YOUR FINANCIAL ADVISOR OR VISIT BRINGYOURCHALLENGES.COM

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ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR MONICA SIWIEC
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RESEARCH

RESEARCH CHIEF WESTRY GREEN
REPORTER/RESEARCHERS
N. JAMIYLA CHISHOLM, KAITLYN PIRIE
CONTRIBUTING RESEARCHER MOLLY M. GINTY

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PHOTO EDITOR WENDY GRANGER
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CONTRIBUTORS

EDITOR J. I. BAKER
SET DESIGNER JEFFREY W. MILLER

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HOW TO USE AN OIL

For an extra dose of renewing hydration, apply a few drops of Age Perfect Cell Renewal Oil to skin after cleansing and follow with Age Perfect Cell Renewal Day Cream.

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NOW, RESTORE RESILIENCE, RADIANCE, VITALITY

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DRAMATICALLY, SO SKIN LOOKS DRY AND DULL.

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NIELSEN YEAR-TO-DATE AUGUST 2014, IN WOMEN FACE CARE IN MASS MARKET



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Editor's Note

HAPPY 15TH ANNIVERSARY TO US! But first let's talk about you.

As you might imagine, *Real Simple* receives correspondence from readers every month. Sometimes it comes by mail, sometimes by e-mail, sometimes through social media. Many of the messages begin with "I have been a subscriber since the beginning..." and then there is usually a complaint. The magazine isn't "simple." We don't understand how "real" people live. And your kids definitely don't eat chard.

You, dear reader, are tough to please. Which is why we love you.

Sometimes I am tempted to stop reading after "I have been a subscriber since the beginning," because I know what follows will probably be bad. But I keep reading—all of us on staff do. You see, by taking the time to write—even when we have made you mad—you are showing that you care. (Sorry.)

You are a giant audience of discerning people who live all over the place, with various tastes and lifestyles, incomes, ages, and interests.

#WOMENIRL

HAVE YOU CHECKED OUT @WOMENIRL?

It's *Real Simple*'s new Instagram account. Because so much of what we see on Instagram has been filtered (literally!), we think it's time women started sharing the real moments. Tag your unedited photos #womenIRL (short for Women in Real Life) and we'll post our favorites on our social accounts. And don't forget to follow @womenIRL on Instagram.



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P.S. While I've got you (wait, you're still reading?), let me tell you about two wonderful offers we have going to celebrate our anniversary.

- First, you can give a gift of *Real Simple* to a friend (or even an enemy, if you really want to confuse her). For just \$15, she'll get one year of the print magazine, our digital edition, and our fantastic Weeknight Meal Planner newsletter. Go to realsimple.com/rs15years.
- Also, in tribute to this month's cover, *Real Simple* and our partner 1-800-FLOWERS have curated an online shop of beautiful rose arrangements for you to pick from. *Real Simple* readers can receive a 20 percent discount by using the code SIMPLE20. Go to 1800flowers.com/realsimple.

With each story we run, each item of clothing or furniture or recipe we publish, we're trying to cast our net as wide as we possibly can. "Would they actually buy/do/make that?" we always ask. Because we endeavor to please 100 percent of you. Of course, we will never get it right 100 percent of the time. But hope springs eternal.

So now, on the month of our 15th anniversary, I want to say "thank you." Thank you to our longtime subscribers, occasional readers, and everybody in between. Thank you for continuing to read, even after we disappoint you. *Especially* after we disappoint you. Thank you for understanding that *Real Simple* is smart and unique and beautiful, just as you are.

And that we will continue to be here for you—to make every day of your life just a little bit better—just as you are here for us. Without you, we would be nothing. Does that sound overly dramatic? Maybe. But you know it's true.

Kristin van Oort



Floral Dress \$59.99

3/15/15 - 3/31/15

When there's a sunny side,

why walk any other way?

Love.

LIZ CLAIBORNE

Exclusively at JCPenney

Your Words

Q.
What *Real Simple* solution has improved your life most?

A.

A tip straight out of the premiere issue: the Three-Quarters Rule.

The rule suggests that you restock an item when it is 75 percent gone. Prior to reading this advice, I rarely planned ahead, which meant I often made last-minute trips to the grocery store to buy just one thing—from butter to bandages. (I lived in the mountains at the time, so a “run to the store” was never quick.) Now that I am always prepared, life is a lot less stressful.

LINDA MCGILL, Johnstown, Colorado

WANT MORE TOP-RATED, ALL-TIME FAVORITE RS RECIPES? GO TO PAGE 180.

The Chicken with White Beans and Tomatoes recipe.

For years I was hoping to incorporate more beans into my family's diet, but I couldn't find a dish that everyone enjoyed. This recipe is a smash hit. My husband requests it on a weekly basis, and my grandchildren always ask for a second helping.

MIRIAM GUTWEIN,
New York, New York



Keeping bills and important mail organized in a 13-pocket accordion file with tabs for each month. I store each year's binder neatly in a closet with its corresponding tax return in the last slot. This way, I don't have to sort through years of monthly bills when looking for a specific document.

LORENA VAN BUSKIRK,
Gainesville, Virginia

The 15-minute ballet-barre workout.

I used to attend barre classes, but they are a bit pricey and too far away. Plus, my schedule is pretty busy, so it can be difficult to find time for exercise. Thanks to this short routine, I manage to consistently work out at home a few times a week.

KATHY KIMBALL, Jacksonville, Florida



It has to be dryer sheets and their versatility, especially on my wooden floors. Dust bunnies, gone!

MARIE HERNANDEZ,
Hammond, Indiana

A new use for my candlestick.

I received a beautiful, antique candlestick as a wedding present, but it just sat in the back of my china cabinet collecting dust. After discovering I could convert it into a bracelet holder, I am now able to enjoy a friend's gift and find the perfect accessory for my outfit at the same time.

EMILY G. ROSS,
Washington, D.C.



Illustration by Ben Wiseman



For me, the best tip has been to wash my clothes by fabric type rather than color. It revolutionized the laundry!

@SACAMAX

FOR THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO FIGHTING STAINS, TURN TO PAGE 71.

Removing stubborn tree sap with olive oil.

My friends own a Christmas-tree farm, and every December my husband volunteers to help cut down trees. Thanks to this suggestion, I no longer struggle to get rid of the tree sap that inevitably ends up everywhere in my home.

ABBY PARISH MOSER,
Pennsburg, Pennsylvania



Real Simple changed the way I blow-dry my hair. I now know to start with the underside and style my hair when it's 80 percent dry. This has shaved off several minutes from my morning routine.

JUDITH STOYKO,
Hayward, California

SIGN UP AT
REALSIMPLE.COM/
GETMEALPLANNER.

The Weeknight Meal Planner.

Back when I used to decide my family's dinner menu the day of, I would often overbuy groceries or forget essential ingredients. This weekly newsletter's schedule and shopping lists take the stress out of attempting new recipes. Also, it can be tiring to come up with new ideas on my own, so the planner helps keep my family out of a chicken-breast rut.

JENN JAMES, Carmel, Indiana



Cleaning pet fur from furniture with a damp rubber glove. It saved my life—and upholstery!

ERIKA GARCÉS,
Hudson,
Massachusetts

How to opt out of preapproved credit cards.

I USED TO RECEIVE A DOZEN OR SO CREDIT-CARD OFFERS EVERY WEEK. AFTER TAKING THIS SIMPLE ADVICE FROM YOUR MONEY SECTION, I NO LONGER HAVE GIANT STACKS OF UNWANTED ENVELOPES TO OPEN AND SHRED. IT'S BEEN SUCH A HUGE TIME SAVER.

LINDA HATFIELD,
Des Plaines, Illinois



I make the tomato and cantaloupe salad every summer!

VALESKA OKRAGLY,
St. Paul, Minnesota

SUBSCRIBER OF THE MONTH



KARI SOLOMON

HER ANSWER: Two years ago, I thought that my young daughter's penchant for laying out her treasures on the floor meant that she was messy. Then, I experienced an aha! moment when reading the article "Organizing for Your Personality." It explained that some of us prefer to neatly tuck items away, while others like to display. I immediately purchased a hanging wall rack, which she now happily uses to organize her belongings.

STATS: Age 41; married, with 10-year-old twins; stay-at-home mom; Montvale, New Jersey.

HOW DO YOU SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE?

I limit my children to three extracurricular activities at a time, which can be challenging, because they want to do everything. I make sure to talk to them about the importance of downtime.

WHAT'S YOUR SECRET TALENT?

When I read Harry Potter to my kids at bedtime, I can make realistic voices for all the characters. On one of my nights off, my babysitter got heckled by my children for not reading it "right."

WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GREW UP?

A dancer for TV shows like *Solid Gold* and *In Living Color*. I never became one, but at weddings and Bar Mitzvahs, I'm always the first one on the dance floor and the last one off!



Storing brown sugar with two marshmallows to keep it soft.

AMELIA MICHELI,
Newton, Massachusetts

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87% of women find that Double Serum boosts the performance of their moisturizer.*

* Satisfaction test, 95 women, 4 weeks.

The right way to do laundry.

Real Simple taught me that I had been washing my clothes incorrectly for years. Nowadays, I use less detergent, load the machine in the right order, pull zippers all the way up, and unbutton all the tops. Not only am I spending less money on detergent but my towels are softer and my clothes also feel cleaner.

SHURLA BOVELL,
Brooklyn, New York



Real Simple's wedding checklist = reality check in budgeting and planning!
@ATASTE OF WORLD



Freezing a batch of pesto in ice-cube trays for future recipes.

AMY BEDFORD,
Brooklyn, New York

When you have open shelves, store items in baskets.

In my home, there's a doorless storage area where I keep various kitchen and laundry items. Previously, the items were crammed together on the shelves, and I was embarrassed whenever anyone saw the clutter. Now I use 14 baskets to group like items together. I no longer mind if someone walks in the room!

ELDORA OLSON,
Peoria, Illinois

SOUND APPEALING? TURN TO PAGE 190 FOR AN INFINITELY VERSATILE WORK WARDROBE.

Creating a well-balanced wardrobe.

I REVAMPED MY CLOSET BASED ON AN ARTICLE DETAILING WHAT KEY PIECES EVERYONE SHOULD OWN (FOR EXAMPLE, A WHITE BUTTON-DOWN AND A FITTED JACKET). I LEARNED WHAT BASICS I ALREADY POSSESSED, WHICH ONES I WAS MISSING, AND HOW TO PROPERLY MIX AND MATCH ALL THE ITEMS. NOWADAYS IT'S MUCH EASIER TO PULL TOGETHER A POLISHED LOOK IN THE MORNING.

JILL PONTIERE, Orlando, Florida



My husband wears white dress shirts, and they always had sweat stains on the collar. Then I tried *Real Simple's* stain-prevention tip, which suggested creating a barrier by ironing baby powder into the fabric. This has been a game changer. I no longer have to buy every kind of stain remover out there.

RONDA Q. WILSON, Ava, Illinois



How to fold fitted sheets. (Seriously.) I showed my sister, who is usually the one giving me practical advice, and she said, "This has changed my life."

TAKAKO NAGUMO,
Kew Gardens, New York



UPCOMING QUESTION
What is the funniest thing that has ever happened to you on vacation?

Go to realsimple.com/yourwords and let us know your answer to this question. Your response could appear on these pages.

Keeping plastic bags in an empty tissue box.

When I stored loose plastic bags on the top shelf of my kitchen closet, half of them would fall out whenever I opened the door. Now I have several boxes of bags, separated by different sizes. It's so simple and yet so effective.

SHERRY JARGO,
Southport, North Carolina



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the Realist

UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE FOR MODERN TIMES

NEW USES FOR OLD THINGS: ANNIVERSARY EDITION

We were coming up with hacks long before they were called hacks. Here are some of the best.

Photographs by James Wojcik

DUSTPAN AS TOY HERDER
Picking up Lego blocks, plastic soldiers, and letter magnets off the floor every single day won't feel nearly as soul crushing if you can do it in one fell swoop.

PROP STYLING BY LISA FLUDZINSKI AND LINDEN ELSTRAN

NEW USES FOR OLD THINGS

Cleaning Hacks

THE REALIST



WHAT WERE WE THINKING?
Toilet-paper tube as hair-accessory organizer?



1 LINT ROLLER AS GLITTER GRABBER Art project gone awry? Use a sticky roller to clean up stray sparkle from surfaces and clothes.

2 MAYONNAISE AS STICKER REMOVER Eliminate the pesky residue labels leave behind on dishes and jars with a healthy dollop of mayo and a cloth. Rub until it's all gone.

3 DRYER SHEET AS SHOWER-DOOR CLEANER For brilliant results minus the elbow grease, rub a dampened dryer sheet over a wet shower door to banish soap-scum buildup.

2



3



4



4 ALUMINUM FOIL AS PAN SCRUBBER Add a drop of dish soap, then tackle the stubborn bits on a glass pan or an oven rack with a scrunched-up ball of foil.

5 COFFEE FILTER AS SCREEN WIPER To clear dust and static from sensitive touch screens and flat screens, swipe them with a lint-free filter.

5



INSET PHOTOGRAPH BY MONICA BUCK

THIS FLIGHT

THIS FLIGHT

OR THIS ONE

EVEN THIS FLIGHT

THIS FLIGHT

OR THIS ONE

OR THIS ONE

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Corralling Hacks



1



2

1 HAIR ELASTIC AS BOUQUET HOLDER Create an artful arrangement sans floral foam. Simply wrap a clear hair band around the stems, then let the flowers fall naturally. Particularly helpful for filling out wide-mouth vases.

2 PICTURE FRAME AS DRY-ERASE BOARD Because your household to-do list shouldn't look like it belongs in a conference room. Frame a piece of wallpaper or fabric, then jot notes on the glass with a dry-erase marker. Pretty and practical.



WHAT WERE WE THINKING?
Comb to create decorative lines on a cake?



3



3 TIGHTS AS GIFT-WRAP STORAGE To prevent left-over wrapping paper from denting, ripping, or unraveling before the next celebration, slide a cut leg of old tights over the roll.

4 NAIL POLISH AS KEY CODER Tired of fumbling at the front door? ID each key with its very own shade of nail polish so that you can grab the right one in a flash.

4



5



6



5 SHOE BOXES AS DRAWER DIVIDERS Cut shoe boxes in half, along the length or width, and fill the resulting compartments with folded underwear, socks, or stacked bras.

6 FILE SORTER AS CUP-BOARD ORGANIZER Save space (and put a stop to cabinet avalanches) by storing cookie sheets, cutting boards, and pot lids in this desk accessory.



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NEW USES FOR OLD THINGS

Timesaving Hacks

THE REALIST



1 HAIR DRYER AS MIRROR DEFOGGER After a shower, quickly clear a steamed-up bathroom mirror with a blast of hot or cold air.



2 EGG SLICER AS ALL-PURPOSE SLICER Those of us lacking *Chopped*-level skills can whip out this gadget to neatly cut fresh mozzarella, mushrooms, and strawberries.



3 BABY POWDER AS DRY SHAMPOO Don't have time for a full wash and blow? Sprinkle baby powder on roots and brush through.

4 LIGHTBULB AS RIBBON DEWRINKLER Smooth out that grosgrain before it festoons a gift by holding it taut over a clean and warm (but not hot) lightbulb.



WHAT WERE WE THINKING?
Plastic bags as knee pads?



5 FLATIRON AS TOUCH-UP TOOL When you're pressed for time, combat creases on shirt collars, cuffs, plackets, and hems with the straightening iron you use for your hair. (Make sure to wipe away styling-product residue first.)

6 SALAD SPINNER AS SWEATER DRYER The spinner's centrifugal force helps to whirl away excess water and speed up the drying process. Now, laying flat to dry won't take forever.

INSET PHOTOGRAPH BY KANA OKADA



NEW

NO WORRIES HERE.

NEW Secret Outlast Clear Gel. Superior odor protection that goes on clear for no white marks. FEARLESSNESS. APPLY DAILY.



Sanity-Saving Hacks

THE REALIST



WHAT WERE WE THINKING?

Dryer lint as molding clay for kids?



1



2



3



4



5



6



WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A POOL NOODLE? Find out at realsimple.com/pinned/newuses.

1 RUBBER BAND AS BOTTLE OPENER You don't need Vin Diesel biceps to open stubborn tops, just an ordinary elastic. Wrap it around tight to give you a strong grip.

2 SPAGHETTI AS CANDLE LIGHTER Singed fingertips take the fun out of birthday cake. Use uncooked spaghetti to light multiple or hard-to-reach candles.

3 CAN OPENER AS CLAMSHELL CUTTER To crack the Fort Knox plastic cases of electronics and toys: Clamp the can opener on the top-right edge of the back-side of the package, then cut around the perimeter.

4 STRAW AS NECKLACE TRANSPORT For tangle-free jewelry during your travels, unclasp the chain, thread it through a straw, and fasten.

5 TOOTHPICKS AS FROSTING PROTECTOR Afraid plastic wrap will smudge the icing? Stick some toothpicks in the top of the cake to create a tentlike cover.

6 BUNDT PAN AS CORN HOLDER Keep the cob steady in the center of a Bundt pan with one hand so you can slice easily with the other. The pan's high sides corral flying kernels.

INSET PHOTOGRAPH BY AIMÉE HERRING

philosophy: when you renew with hope, *wishes come true.*

*based on women who expressed an opinion in an 8-week self-assessment study with 52 participants



let us grant you *three skin wishes*

philosophy skin labs introduces our **newest breakthrough**: an all-day, lightweight skin renewing moisturizer featuring clinically proven non-stop renewal technology.

day after day, **91% of women fell in love with the feel of their skin and would recommend renewed hope in a jar to a friend.*** here are the skin wishes they saw fulfilled:

1. **refined texture** with visibly smaller pores and fine lines virtually lifted away
2. soft, **dewy smoothness**, comforted by instant and all-day hydration
3. re-energized **healthy color and glow** that lasts up to 3x longer*

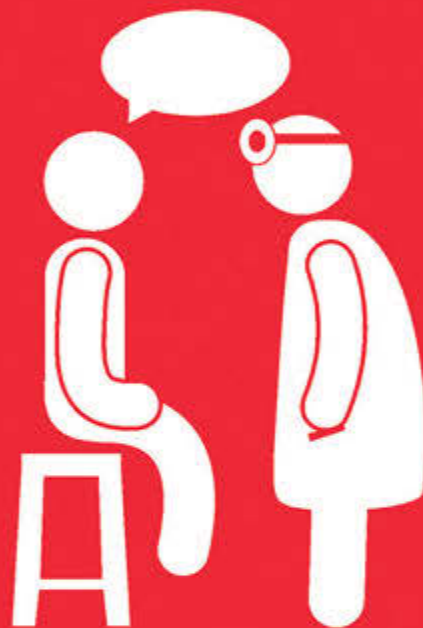
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Life Lessons

GOOD READ



Sight unseen

Have you ever had a eureka moment? *Sophia Tzeng*, this year's Life Lessons Essay Contest winner, tells how a pair of contacts restored her vision, revealing a brave (and sometimes frightening) new world.

Photograph by Mika Ninagawa

THE MONTH BEFORE I turned 13, my world exploded from flat to fully dimensional, from matte to spectacular gloss, and from distant to immediate and up-close. Moving from thick-walled myopia to perfect vision in the form of two tiny disks inserted into each of my unseeing eyes plunged me into a new reality that was both breathtaking and terrifying in all its depth and color: the Real World! This realization of life in all its dimensionality, and of myself as a participant, not just observer, changed the course of my life—and has continued to do so every morning ever since.

Stodious and quiet, with uneven bangs that hung to the top of glasses as thick as the thinnest sliced bread, I was the shy, solitary student with hands folded at the front of classrooms or cowering at the back of the cafeteria. Oversized and gawky, I was

**Ever since I could remember,
I awoke each morning
to a formless world.
Unlike dreams or thoughts,
which were clear,
reality was nothing but
vague shapes and splotches.**

nearly legally blind. I hid behind pink-tinted, prone-to-breaking plastic windshields chosen for me from the rack of frames that came free with our family insurance plan. They tended to slip to the tip of my nose from the weight, making me squint even more and making it harder to see. Before long, they were taped and smeared with superglue from being periodically chewed by the dog.

Ever since I could remember, I awoke each morning to a formless world. Unlike dreams or thoughts, which were clear, reality was nothing but vague shapes and splotches. Severe astigmatism—a condition in which I have “footballs for eyeballs” rather than perfect lunar orbs, giving me double vision—made my lenses thick and forbidding. They provided enough definition to navigate but rendered the world flat. Compared with the vast, lively places I inhabited in my imagination or when I read, “real” life felt like watching events and people pass through a scuffed-up airplane porthole. Furniture, chairs, the blackboard, and faces became flatter year by year as my vision continued to worsen and the lenses grew thicker.

On the eve of my 12th birthday, my head broke the windshield in a car crash that sank me into a coma no one thought I would awake from. As I recovered, I became acutely aware of alternate worlds in which I hadn’t woken up, in which I ceased to exist, or in which any person, thing, or thought could cease to exist.

Life as I knew it was subject to change. This realization triggered a cascade of subtle choices that confounded my conservative immigrant family: I tried on shorts, made friends with boys, and wore jeans—all previously verboten. Then, nearly a year after the crash, I counted up a lifetime’s saved-up allowance and ordered special contact lenses, hoping to correct my vision in a way that glasses could not. My thrifty parents probably never considered

the extra expense, given that the glasses worked for school and I was forbidden from playing sports anyway.

We traveled to the optical store in our Ford Fairmont, the car window framing cornfields and a cloudy sky casting everything in shadow. We passed office buildings, box stores, movie theaters, car dealerships, and strip malls, each surrounded by rectilinear expanses of gray parking lot. The large shopping complex floated as a fortress over an asphalt moat, rippled with tar patches, empty of shoppers. Every single thing appeared matte and flat, and nothing stood out.

At the store, I struggled to put the custom disks—made for me!—in my eyes. After more than an hour of losing them and blinking them out, I finally placed them with little effort. I stood, glasses in hand, and swayed, the red walls blaringly bright. Chairs sprung from the floor, racks of eyeglasses floated forward, and faces hovered obscenely close. Things leapt and danced as if I had dropped into Alice’s psychedelic rabbit hole. Dizzy and nauseated, I had to sit down.

I closed my eyes and felt the alien objects inside them. I wanted to tear them out but instead opened my eyes. My mother was glaring at me, impatient, so I stood again and held on to her as we exited the store. The car looked shocking and garish between bright, newly painted yellow lines. From inside, my mother pushed the passenger door open, and I jumped back as it swung, weighty and threatening.

Everything was now a Thing, an Object to be contended with, something to be maneuvered around, Real and Heavy. The vinyl seats appeared putrescent orange with dirty cracks and a thousand pinpricked holes. The roof seemed ready to fall on my head. I rolled down the window and gasped as we pulled out of the parking lot. Road, sidewalk, and building rose and fell away with startling dimensionality. Objects loomed, closer and nearer. The sky itself burned white and gray and slight blue, mottled with texture and light, and flew darkly into the distance. I clutched the handrest of the car door. I felt as if I were in a rocket ship, launching out of orbit.

The world had suddenly shifted. Previously, moving through it had been



About the author

Sophia Tzeng is a professional organizational consultant and the single mother of three girls. She lives in Portland, Oregon, and likes to hike, bike, swim, and practice yoga.

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The world had suddenly shifted. Previously, moving through it had been an uninteresting exercise one had to endure. Now each blink was momentous, and each new perception evoked new possibilities.

a lifeless experience, an uninteresting exercise one had to endure until the next book, like pushing a pebble across the sidewalk with a stick. Now each blink was momentous and revealing, and each new perception evoked new possibilities.

What I realized the moment I put the contacts in my eyes was that the world is colorful and real. That I am real. From that day forward, the world sang to me in all its complexity, and the song has grown more beguiling the more I pay attention.

Nearly 30 years later, I still go to bed and wake up basically blind. My daughters marvel that I can navigate dark rooms and suspect that I have evolved the capacity to echolocate, like a bat. As I have aged, my other senses, made acute by my entrapment in walls of thick, scratched glass, remain vibrant and strong. Every now and again, it happens that I lose a contact lens and cannot—between work, motherhood, and the still extraordinary cost of specialty lenses—afford to replace them. I am plummeted again into a world that is flat, fixed, and gray. After a week, I begin to withdraw. After two weeks, I no longer call friends back and turn unabashedly shy. And then, as it was that first morning, I find my eyeballs and the world appears, inviting me to dive on in.

I can only imagine what it would be like to wake up and be able to see, truly see. My eyesight is too severe for surgery, I'm told. And even if it were possible, I'm not sure I would want it. Each day is a transformation: I awake, grope for my glasses, and head for the bathroom to put on my contacts. In doing so, I move from an indistinct world that is flat and fixed to one that is dynamic and impossibly deep. It makes me wonder what other levels of depth and movement exist all around us—as if we could purchase and put in contact lenses for compassion, to help us see how it ebbs and flows. I am grateful for the insights that come from daily having to fix my eyesight, and from just being alive. Every day that I go from blind to seeing to being is a eureka moment. ■



Check out the other winning essays

Yasmine S. Ali, M.D., 39, of Nashville took second prize, and Abby Zimmerman, 19, of Windsor, Colorado, won third prize. To read their entries, go to realsimple.com/lifelessonscontest.

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Modern Manners

HOW TO BEHAVE IN 2015: TECHNOLOGY EDITION

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NEW RULES OF ETIQUETTE THAT SIRI CANNOT.

Rule No. 1: Share carefully.

In these days of posting, tagging, and connecting widely and instantly, it can be hard to remember how that affects other people. But no matter the medium, the basics of courtesy are the same: Follow the Golden Rule. That means being kind, respectful, trustworthy, and gracious—and trying to spare people's feelings. (And don't embarrass anyone! Would you want someone to post a picture of you wiping out on the ice-skating rink?) When it comes to social media, bear in mind how perniciously innocent posts can spread—and how broad the scope of potential exclusion has become. Ask yourself, "Who might see this? And how would they feel?" One basic rule: Don't post party pictures. People who weren't invited might feel bad, the hosts might feel bad in turn, and other guests might have privacy issues. Plus, you don't want your teetotaling grandma to see you doing Jell-O shots.

Rule No. 2: In a similar vein, when you notice on Facebook that your child was left out of a classmate's birthday party, let it go.

Social media doesn't just increase our risk of hurting others. We are also increasingly likely to know when we're being excluded—and, worse, when our kids are. I won't tell you to get a thicker skin. Sensitivity and courtesy go hand in hand, after all. But do try not to fret. Chances are good that the host's intentions aren't mean, and there may be factors you're unaware of (for example, the climbing-gym max is six kids, or it's an all-boy party). If your child feels hurt, consider this a teachable moment—one that helps her understand how it feels to be left out and that fosters resilience in the face of disappointment.

About Catherine

The author of the parenting memoir *Waiting for Birdy*, Catherine Newman has shared her wisdom on matters ranging from family and friends to happiness and pickling in numerous publications. She gets advice from her husband and two opinionated children in Amherst, Massachusetts.



Rule No. 3: A thank-you text is OK for a dinner party, but don't give up your stationery.

It's tempting to send a (faster, emoji-filled) thank-you via smartphone or e-mail, but for most situations I confess to agreeing with old-school Emily Post. One should—still—err on the side of the written thank-you note. Someone took the time to give you a gift or offer his or her care. You can take the time to express your gratitude. That said, changing times call for changes to the rule, so here's mine: Consider the gifter. A young person had you to dinner or gave you concert tickets? Sure, a grateful e-mail or text should do the trick. Your grandmother mailed you a hand-crocheted blanket? Dig up a stamp. Gray areas include baby gifts and condolence notes. Traditional etiquette recommends traditional note writing, but if you're exhausted or grieving, just do your best. Your supporters are there to shore you up, not to keep tallies. And any thank-you is better than no thank-you at all.

Rule No. 4: If you want your friend to stop looking at her phone while you're having dinner, model good behavior—conspicuously.

Remember when the only distractions at a restaurant were the loud talker at the next table and the over-eager server who *really* wants you to get dessert? Now there are the dings and the vibrations of phones. "Be present" is an overused mantra but

an underlived one. If you don't want your friends prioritizing their virtual connections over your flesh-and-blood friendship, say as you sit down, "It's so great to see you. I'm turning off my phone so I make sure I can focus." Or propose it as an idea: "Hey, we see each other so rarely. What do you think about ditching our phones while we have this time together?"

Rule No. 5: Model smart smart-phone behavior around your kids, too. Here's what you want your children to hear you say: "Hang on a sec. Let me put my phone down so I can pay attention to what you're telling me." Minimizing distractedness won't just encourage the kids to do the same; it will also radically enrich the quality of your time with them. If that text or e-mail can wait until later—until the kids are asleep, say, or you're back at your desk—then let it. Consider creating no-tech zones in the house (bedrooms, the dinner table) or no-tech times (breakfast, ride to school, family game night). Get out of the habit of experiencing everything via your online documentation of it. ("Let's not even bring our phones to the lake!") Power off and be with your kids while you can because—*sob!*—they'll be grown and gone before you know it.

Rule No. 6: Follow your teen on Instagram and Facebook if you like, but be as respectful as possible.

It's natural to want to keep tabs, check up, and ascertain that nothing inappropriate or dangerous is happening, which is why you might choose to observe your child's social-media life. But *observe* is the key word here. Don't insert yourself into the conversation or make your presence otherwise obvious. We remember how it felt when our parents butted in or loitered too long when it

came to our social lives, right? Don't be that parent. And in the interest of trust, do be transparent with your child about your plans and intentions. The point is not to trap your kid in bad behavior—it's to be a quiet, caring presence in the background.

Rule No. 7: But your babysitter's Instagram posts are none of your business.

It can be unsettling to see pictures of her (or him) doing something (off duty, of course) that you don't totally approve of. But assuming the photo doesn't show her murdering anyone—just doing the Electric Slide while wearing a lampshade on her head—then look away. And try not to be too moralizing. A responsible child-care worker is free to spend her off hours as she chooses. She should probably have the good

sense to hide such posts, of course, but if her carousing is not affecting her work, chalk it up to social-media TMI and keep scrolling.

Rule No. 8: There's a right way and a wrong way to video your preschooler's graduation.

As comedian Louis CK puts it, parents' devices end up blocking their vision of their actual child: "The resolution on the kid is unbelievable if you just look. It's totally HD." If you must capture the moment on your phone instead of just in your memory, move to the side of the venue and do your recording from there. (This goes for concerts and sporting events, too.) A parent trying to watch her precious Orphan No. 7 in a middle-school production of *Oliver Twist* doesn't want to do it through a tiny screen focused on someone else's kid.

Rule No. 9: Don't extend a friend request to your boss.

Or your clients. Or your children's teachers—without first checking

with the school, which may have rules that you should obey. You don't want professional contacts scrolling through your Bermuda vacation or ogling your daughter's rhythmic-gymnastics performance. If they pursue you, however, and "no" feels impolitic, then adjust your account preferences to maintain a boundary between work and life. Then share selectively.

Rule No. 10: The sender can see that you've opened the Evite. RSVP right away.

Of course you'll need to look at your calendar and check in with your plus one. Beyond that, though, there's no reason not to respond ASAP. (Unless you're waiting to see if a better offer comes along, which is—sorry!—just plain rude.) Figure out if you're attending, then let the party throwers know so that they can plan accordingly. And if you're declining? No need to write a dissertation about your busy social life. "So sorry we can't make it. Have fun!" is plenty.

HAVE AN ETIQUETTE QUESTION?

Submit your social conundrums to Catherine at REALSIMPLE.COM/MODERNMANNERS. Selected letters will be featured on these pages each month.



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BREATHE

Your **breathing** can tell you a lot about **how you're doing emotionally**. When you're **angry**, for example, your breath tends to become **shorter**, shallower, and sharper. Changing the way you breathe **in that moment** can have an **immediate impact**, helping to **settle an agitated mind**. Sit up tall and place one hand over your heart and the other on your navel. Gently deepen your breathing, **allowing your hands to move** away from each other slightly as you

THIS MONTH'S EXPERT

Edward Jones has been teaching Buddhism-inspired vinyasa yoga in New York City and internationally for a decade. He is also a psychoanalyst-in-training. Find him online at wheelandaxle.net and in person at the Shala Yoga House (theshala.com), in New York City.

Photograph by Anita Calero

inhale and a little closer as you exhale. Now **count silently to four** for the length of the **inhale**. See if you can exhale to the same count. **Be patient**. It can be challenging to **lengthen your exhale**.

After a few repetitions, you'll probably find it easier. Continue for 10 breaths—four counts in, four counts out. Then pause, relax your hands in your lap, and breathe naturally. How do you feel?

Just a few moments of **shifting your breathing** toward space and ease may help to **shift your mind**.

Next time you feel the **heat and tightness** of anger, try this pattern and see what happens.

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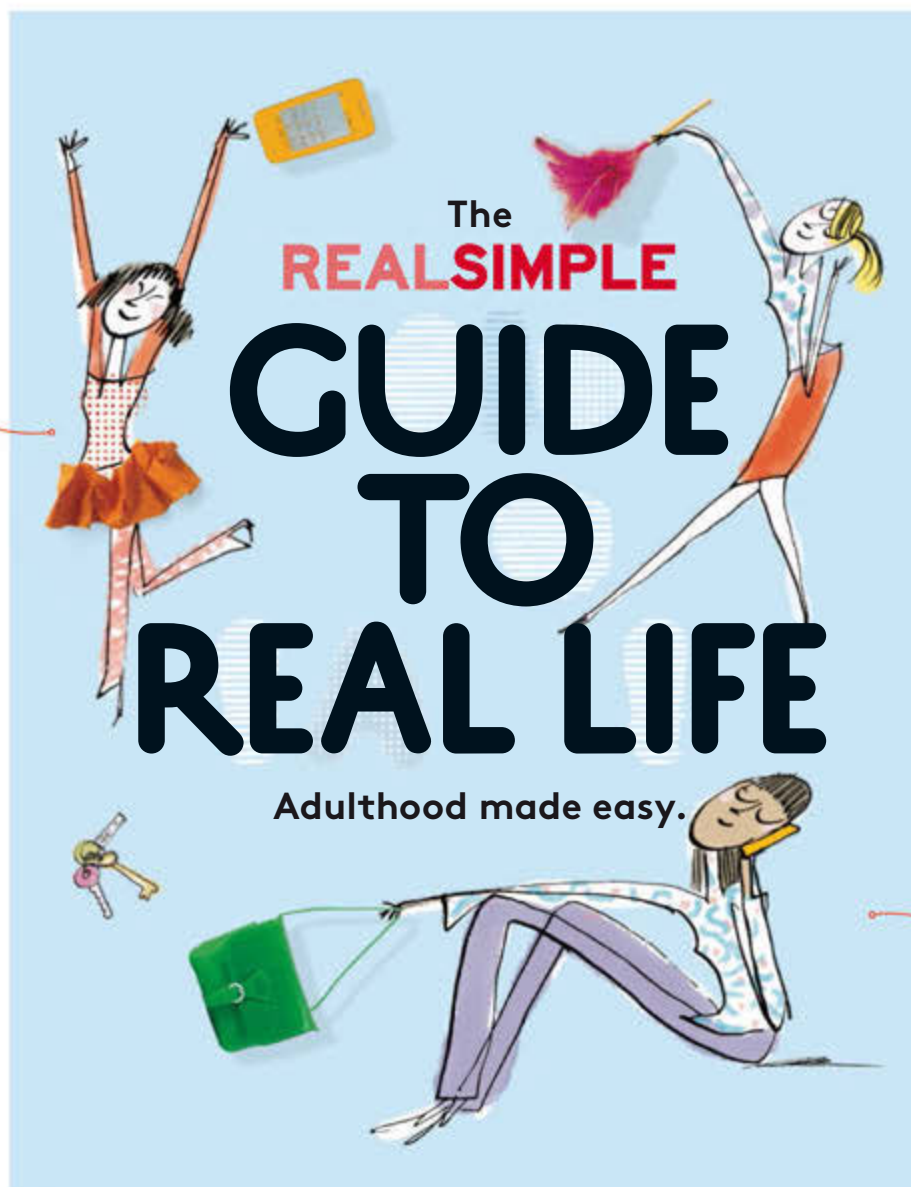
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Right after graduation, the questions start piling up. And they just keep on coming throughout your 20s and beyond: *How do I find a job that I love—and, um, that pays? What should I wear to the interview?* And speaking of clothes, where do I put them when my apartment doesn't even have a closet? *Real Simple* created this encyclopedic book to answer all those questions—and so many more. Here's a sneak peek.

Edited by Noelle Howey Illustrations by Serge Bloch



10 helpful pieces of life advice

Adulthood is confusing. We seek coping strategies where we can find them: the Tao Te Ching, Yoda, The Rules According to JWoww. (OK, maybe not that last one.) We've put together a few more smart ideas for making your way in the world, from 10 truly impressive women. Take a few for the road.

1 | Begin the day with a good book.

I used to get up in the morning and immediately plunge into work. But about six months ago I started doing something different. Now, the very first thing I do is make a cup of coffee, take it back upstairs, and sit up in bed with the book that I was reading the night before. Currently it's a novel. Before that it was Jon Meacham's biography of Thomas Jefferson. It's always something that puts me in a world other than my work world. For the first 15 minutes of the day, I sip coffee and read and take intense pleasure in it all. The minute the cup of coffee is done—or once it's cold—I put the book down. I really believe that happiness is a collection of small, pleasurable experiences, like buying flowers or eating a square of chocolate. I try to have a few of these moments every day.

ANNE-MARIE SLAUGHTER has written widely on work-life balance. She is the president and CEO of the New America Foundation, a nonprofit think tank and civic enterprise based in New York City and Washington, D.C.

2 | Savor your coffee.

How long did it take you to down your last cappuccino? The next time, take a cue from the Japanese, whose formal tea ceremony can last four hours. Before taking a drink, participants raise their bowls in tribute to all the factors that came together to create that moment—from their

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ancestors to the farmers who grew the tea to the elders who taught them how to prepare it. Try this amended routine: Focus on the drink in front of you. Notice the smell, and relish the flavor. You'll find it's a wonderful daily exercise in mindfulness.

JENNIFER ANDERSON, PH.D., an expert on Japanese tea rituals, is a lecturer in anthropology at San José State University, in California.

3 | Be impatient.

Early in my career, I went to numerous meetings where I was the only woman present. I would want to contribute to the conversation but would think, If I say that, everybody will think it's really stupid. And then a man would say exactly what I had in mind, and the other participants would find it brilliant. I learned that you shouldn't wait to speak. I started listening actively, knowing that I was going to comment on something and having it in my mind that I would interrupt at the right moment. It's both polite and useful to say, "Well, before we proceed to the next subject, I would like to add the following." If you wait to be called on, often the discussion will move on so far that whatever you're talking about will not be germane.

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT was the first female U.S. secretary of state. She is currently the chair of the Albright Stonebridge Group, a global consulting firm, in Washington, D.C.

4 | Admit how you feel.

When something disturbing happens, I tend to gloss over it at first. But 5 or 10 minutes later, I have to ask myself what I'm feeling and why I feel that way. And then—it sounds so corny, but it really does work—I acknowledge the feeling. I identify it and own it. Then, usually, I can move on. Not that it's erased from my consciousness, but it's put in a place where I can move around it and deal with it. For example, I was recently talking on the phone to a friend, and she said something complimentary about someone who had hurt me. After the call, I was overcome with irritation. I thought, Why am I so grumpy?

Finally I admitted that I felt irritated, and then the feeling didn't nag me as much anymore. When an emotion is undefinable, it has more power than when you can see it for what it is.

ANNA HOLMES is the creator of the popular women's site Jezebel.com and the editor of The Book of Jezebel.

5 | Fake joy.

We think that we act because of how we feel. But we also feel because of how we act. So use this knowledge to change your mood. Jump up and down; getting both feet off the ground makes you feel childlike and energetic. Or go for a walk. Just this morning, I got an unnerving e-mail from someone and felt lousy about it. So I headed out for a walk in Central Park with a friend. So many things that tend to make a person happy are wrapped up in one little thing—a walk. It really works! When I got home, I wasn't irritated anymore. I realized, Yeah, I've got my perspective back.

GRETCHEN RUBIN is the author of The Happiness Project and Happier at Home.

6 | Praise yourself.

Every thought we have, including self-criticism, paves a neural pathway. These pathways make it easier for us to have the same response the next time. Eventually some circuits get so big that the thoughts go on autopilot. Instead of going to the default—say, criticizing yourself for working too much instead of spending time with your family—give yourself credit for how much time you are spending with your loved ones. Tell yourself that you're doing a good job balancing things. At first you won't believe it. But do it day after day and you'll eventually build new neural pathways. The positive thoughts will become automatic.

LORETTA GRAZIANO BREUNING, PH.D., is the author of Meet Your Happy Chemicals.

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7 Stop imagining the ideal.

I often grow impatient when I want to be in control of a situation. To avoid getting antsy when I am writing and can't find specific words for my thoughts, I try to practice self-compassion. I tell myself that I'm not going to quit even if I become frustrated. I'll say out loud, "You're not perfect, but that's OK. Writing can be a messy process, and it's not ideal, but you can handle it." Talking to yourself may feel awkward and goofy, but it quells that feeling of impatience. And it certainly beats foraging for carbs, which I'm also apt to do when I am agitated and have writer's block.

BRENÉ BROWN, PH.D., is a research professor at the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work and the author of the book Daring Greatly. You may have seen her widely viewed talk on TED.com.

8 Pluck the weeds.

I was miserable on and off in my life till age 39, blaming outside things, like my job or my relationship. And then it hit me: I am the leader of my life, and I can choose to believe what I want. It's such a simple idea, but it was a pivotal breakthrough. Now, whenever I have an anxious or negative thought, I use a technique that I learned from my love of gardening—one that I also teach to the girls I mentor. I think, Is this thought a weed that is taking up space and needs to be plucked? Or is it a flower that I need to tend and love and let thrive? I focus all my attention on the thoughts that are beautiful blooms and yank out the negative ones.

ELIZABETH KUNZ is the CEO of Girls on the Run, a nonprofit youth-development program.

9 Let your heart break.

The world is full of what seem like intractable problems. Often we let that paralyze us. Instead, let it spur you to action. There are some people in the world that we can't help, but there are so many more that we can. So when you see a mother and her children suffering in another part of the world, don't look away. Look right at them. Let them break your heart, then let your empa-



thy and your talents help you make a difference in the lives of others. Whether you volunteer every week or just a few times a year, your time and unique skills are invaluable.

MELINDA GATES is a cochair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

10 Know when to listen and when to zone out.

My inner critic is the thing that keeps me doing draft after draft until the work is good. So I trust it and don't want to silence it completely. But you still need to quiet your mind. I try to meditate twice a day, which helps me feel calm and peaceful. I also exercise—not a class where you're held hostage by a teacher's personality, but one where there is dancing and no one is talking to you. It's impossible for me to worry about a script or scenes or salaries when I'm like, Wait—where do I put my foot?

JENNI KONNER is an executive producer of the HBO series Girls.

LOOKING GOOD

For maximally gorgeous results, apply makeup in this order: eyes, concealer, foundation, bronzer, lipstick, blush.

DRESSING LIKE A GROWN-UP

High heels hurt, and it never gets easier. You know what really helps? Toe pads.

FEEDING YOURSELF

A microwave is magical. You can use it to melt chocolate, toast nuts, bake potatoes, steam vegetables, poach salmon...

SPENDING AND SAVING THE RIGHT WAY

You need two credit cards: one rewards card that you use to charge everything, and one backup card for emergency expenses.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR HEALTH

Greasy foods don't help a hangover. In fact, they can aggravate an upset stomach. Eat something easy to digest, like a banana or toast—without butter.

DECORATING AND CLUTTER-BUSTING

Throw-pillow math: There should be one pillow for every butt that can comfortably fit on the sofa.

FAKING A CLEAN HOME

Sorting laundry by color isn't necessary anymore. Instead, sort by fabric weight.

DEALING

Do remove both earbuds when having a conversation. Don't say "No problem" when you mean "You're welcome." Do cover your mouth when yawning. Don't say you'll be there in 10 minutes if it's really going to be 20.

More great advice,
chapter by chapter...

FINDING A PLACE TO LIVE

Don't choose size over the right neighborhood. An easier commute and a safer area are worth more than a roomier living room.

GETTING A JOB

E-mail a thank-you to each person you interviewed with. It's the menschy thing to do. Then send a follow-up thank-you by snail mail.

WE GIVE YOU A BETTER NIGHT



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BUILD THE PERFECT BUNNY DAY BASKET

WITH 

There's no better way to spend the day than baking Easter cookies for the ones you love. **Get creative and use your favorite M&M'S® Chocolate Candies** to decorate them with cute bunnies, bold and vivid eggs, spring flowers, and anything else that inspires the holiday. Then start a yummy new tradition by placing them in your family's baskets for a delicious Easter morning surprise.



In addition to your beautiful cookies, you can further individualize each basket with outdoor toys like sidewalk chalk or fun sunglasses, and of course, a variety of each person's favorite **M&M'S®**!

For more recipes, visit bakingwithmms.com.

M&M'S® EASTER COOKIES

Yields 18-24 cookies

Prep: 20 minutes

Bake: 12-17 minutes

Decoration: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup flour

1 roll (18 oz) store-bought refrigerated cookie dough

$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups prepared vanilla frosting

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup M&M'S® Brand Chocolate Candies

2 cookie sheet pans

1 re-sealable plastic bag

1 small spatula or table knife

1 large round platter

Easter or Spring cookie cutters

Parchment paper

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350°F. Line the cookie sheet pans with the parchment paper.
- Knead the flour into the cookie dough until smooth. Roll out the dough to a scant $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thickness. Cut out the cookies, re-rolling the scraps, if necessary. Transfer cookies to the prepared cookie sheet pans.
- Bake for 12-17 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from the oven, transfer to a wire rack, and let cool completely.
- Spoon the frosting into a re-sealable plastic bag; snip a corner. Pipe outlines on the cookies, then fill in the outlines with a tight zigzag pattern. Spread the frosting with a small spatula or table knife on about half the cookies to make it smooth.
- Decorate with M&M'S® to make fun designs.





Easter is better with



They make every basket complete.

#rs4good



To celebrate our 15th anniversary, *Real Simple* is partnering with four stellar organizations that transform lives—by educating kids, housing families, feeding the homebound, and saving animals. Throughout the year, we'll keep you posted on how you can help, at rslifestylers.com. Meanwhile, learn a little about our esteemed partners.

Written by N. Jamiyla Chisholm

\$14 MILLION

The sum the **ASPCA** provided in grants to animal-welfare organizations across the country last year. Founded in 1866, the venerable agency is not only about finding happy homes for dogs and cats through individual shelters; it also investigates animal cruelty and responds to natural disasters. Are you the happy parent of a rescued animal? Raise awareness by posting a picture of your beloved using #rs4good and #aspca. Want to help more? Find volunteering opportunities near you or donate at aspca.org



FOR MORE INFO on how you can get involved, visit realsimple.com/rs4good.

9 WEEKS

THE LENGTH OF TIME, ON AVERAGE, IT TAKES FOR A **HABITAT FOR HUMANITY** TEAM TO BUILD AN ENTIRE HOUSE. SINCE THE NONPROFIT WAS ESTABLISHED, IN 1976, HABITAT HAS HELPED MORE THAN A MILLION FAMILIES. *REAL SIMPLE* IS WORKING WITH THE FOUNDERS OF **ABEAUTIFULMESS.COM** TO FURNISH A HOUSE IN SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI, WHICH THE BLOGGERS WILL DONATE TO HABITAT. YOU'LL SEE THE RESULTS IN OUR AUGUST ISSUE. TO LEARN HOW TO JOIN A HABITAT TEAM NEAR YOU OR TO DONATE, GO TO HABITAT.ORG.

500 POUNDS

The amount of vegetables prepared every day in the kitchen of the New York City nonprofit **GOD'S LOVE WE DELIVER** (GLWD). For almost 30 years, GLWD has been bringing delicious, nutritious food to people who are too sick to shop and cook for themselves. Volunteers—135 each day—help prep and cook handmade meals and drive them to homebound New Yorkers. What started with one woman and a bicycle currently helps about 5,200 people annually. Later this year, *Real Simple* will host a fund-raiser for the organization in New York City. Learn more about the event at rslifestylers.com. You can donate to God's Love We Deliver at glwd.org.

300%

How much more likely students in Young Women's Leadership schools are to graduate from a four-year college than are their peers. The schools, a program of the **YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP NETWORK** (YWLN), currently serve more than 13,000 New York City kids, grades 6 through 12. With affiliates in Texas and Maryland, YWLN is dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty through education. Last year 83 percent of its high school seniors were accepted into four-year colleges. *Real Simple* will partner with YWLN on mentoring efforts, holding a career day at the RS offices, and will set up a *Real Simple*/YWLN college grant. Learn more or donate at ywln.org.



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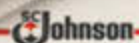


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TIPS, TRICKS, SHORTCUTS, AND ADVICE



Photograph by Stephen Lewis

PROP STYLING BY NOEMI BONAZZI

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HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS

Ultimate stain-removal chart

Wipe out any spot, smudge, or splatter with this go-to guide for washable fabrics.



AFTER TREATING
Wash fabrics as recommended. The sooner, the better!

DRINKS	
 COFFEE	Boil some WATER and stretch the fabric over a bowl. Carefully pour the water through the stain from about a foot above. If the coffee had milk in it, follow with an oil solvent, like CARBONA STAIN DEVILS #8 COFFEE, TEA, WINE AND JUICE (\$3.40, soap.com). If it contained sugar, follow with a pretreatment product, like SHOUT TRIGGER TRIPLE-ACTING STAIN REMOVER (\$3.30, amazon.com) and let sit for 30 minutes before washing.
 JUICE	Apply a DISH-SOAP solution (1 tablespoon clear soap in 10 ounces water). Blot to remove the stain and soap residue. If the stain remains, use a warm white towel to blot on an AMMONIA solution (1 part ammonia to 2 parts water).
 WINE	For RED WINE : Coat the stain with SALT . Boil WATER and stretch the fabric over a bowl. Carefully pour the water onto the spot from about a foot above. For WHITE WINE : Run cold WATER over the stain, then spray with a DISH-SOAP solution (see Juice) and dab with an ENZYME DETERGENT . (Most everyday detergents contain enzymes.)

FOOD	
 BERRIES	Use a spatula or a plastic knife to scrape off any excess. Apply a HYDROGEN PEROXIDE formula (½ teaspoon dish soap and ½ cup hydrogen peroxide). Rinse.
 CHOCOLATE	Scrape off any excess. Then spray with a DISH-SOAP solution (see Juice) and dab with DETERGENT .
 GUM	Rub an ICE CUBE over the spot to freeze the gum, then chip away as much as possible using a spatula or a plastic knife. To loosen the remaining residue, apply a lubricant, like GLYCERIN , then scrape it off. Rinse. If any gum remains, dab with DISH SOAP .
 ICE CREAM	Rinse thoroughly with cool WATER , then apply a stain pretreatment, such as SHOUT . Fill a sink with more cool WATER and a few drops of DETERGENT and let soak.



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SAUCES AND CONDIMENTS		
 MUSTARD	Flush the stain with WHITE VINEGAR , then apply a DISH-SOAP solution (see Juice) and let sit for 15 minutes.	 SOY SAUCE
 TOMATO SAUCE	Treat with SHOUT . If any of the stain remains, use an eyedropper or a clean toothbrush to apply WHITE VINEGAR to lighten it.	
 KETCHUP	Rinse stain with cold running WATER . Blot with AMMONIA solution (see Juice) then rinse again. Pretreat with SHOUT .	 SALAD DRESSING
 SALAD DRESSING		

Scrape off any excess, then apply a **DISH-SOAP** solution (see Juice). Blot with a damp towel to remove any residue. If the stain persists, apply a few drops of **WHITE VINEGAR**.

Sprinkle **CORNSTARCH** on the spot and let sit to soak up the oil. Rinse with cool water. Apply **SHOUT** and let sit for another 15 minutes.



THE STAIN EXPERTS

Donna Smallin Kuper, certified housecleaning technician and author of *Clear the Clutter, Find Happiness*.

Kevin Tibbs, formulation scientist and creator of the Better Life line of cleaning products.

The Real Simple home-department editors.



Illustrations by
Eight Hour Day

HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS

Ultimate stain-removal chart (cont.)

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MAKEUP		OUTDOORS	HOUSEHOLD MATERIALS		
 NAIL POLISH	Place the stain facedown on clean paper towels. Apply NAIL-POLISH REMOVER to the back of the stain. Replace the paper towels frequently to soak up the liquid. Repeat as needed. Rinse in cold water. (Note: If the fabric is acetate or triacetate, take the piece to a dry cleaner.)	 GRASS	 CANDLE WAX	Rub an ICE CUBE over the spot to freeze the wax, then chip away as much as possible using a plastic knife. Boil some WATER and stretch the fabric over a bowl. Carefully pour the water onto the spot from about a foot above.	
 FOUNDATION	Apply RUBBING ALCOHOL to the stain using a cotton swab, then blot with a cotton ball. Repeat as needed.	 DIRT OR MUD	 INK	For ballpoint: Create a PETROLEUM-JELLY "dam" around the stain to stop it from spreading. Next, apply RUBBING ALCOHOL with a clean toothbrush. Open a window for ventilation and dab with a cotton ball and MINERAL SPIRITS . Let dry. Rinse with a DISH-SOAP solution (see Juice). For permanent marker: Use a clean toothbrush to rub AMODEX INK AND STAIN REMOVER (\$15, wayfair.com/RSstain) into the spot.	
 LIPSTICK	Spritz the spot with HAIR SPRAY and let sit for 10 minutes. Wipe with a damp cloth to remove any residue and remaining stain.			 PAINT	Use a paper towel to wipe away any dried acrylic-paint or water-based-paint residue. Sponge on a solution of DETERGENT diluted with WARM WATER . After the paint softens, remove the excess with a spatula or a plastic knife. Rinse and repeat as needed.
 DRYER TIP Be sure a stain is removed before drying or the heat will set it.					
 POOP				 BABY FORMULA	
Scrape off any excess using a plastic knife. Turn the fabric over and rinse thoroughly with COLD WATER . Pretreat by soaking in WARM WATER with DETERGENT for 30 minutes. To disinfect completely, add CHLORINE BLEACH OR COLOR-SAFE BLEACH to the wash and launder in warm water.		 BLOOD	For a wet stain: Soak in WATER , then dab on AMMONIA with a cotton swab. For a dry stain: Soak in SALT WATER for a few hours. Rinse. Treat with an AMMONIA solution (see Juice).		
 VOMIT		Scrape off any excess using a plastic knife. Treat with SHOUT and let sit for 30 minutes. (To disinfect completely, add CHLORINE BLEACH OR COLOR-SAFE BLEACH to the wash and launder in WARM WATER .)		 COLLAR RING	Pretreat with SHOUT . If the discoloring remains, apply AMMONIA if the stain is fresh or WHITE VINEGAR if the stain is old. Rinse.
 UNDERARM YELLOWING		For a fresh stain: Dab with SHAMPOO . For an older stain, make a paste by stirring 4 ground-up DIGESTIVE-ENZYME TABLETS (such as Nature's Plus Digestive Enzyme) with 1 tablespoon WATER . Apply and let sit for 1 hour.		 PET URINE	Dab with DETERGENT and let sit for 15 minutes.
		 HAVE A RUG SPILL? Find the best solutions for stains on rugs and carpet at real-simple.com/carpetstain .			

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Spring is calling! And we've answered with plenty of fresh products and ideas designed to give you more time to actually enjoy it. From chaotic closets to out-of-control garages, our experts can help you organize all the things that rob time from your day – giving you time to get outside and play. Live organized. Love the extra time for life.

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Q.
weather pattern
Whenever it rains, even if it's only sprinkling, I find it impossible to get my Schnoodle to go out for his walk. Any tips?

L.G., via Facebook

A. Many dogs just don't like getting wet, so this is a common reaction. It's also possible that your pooch was spooked during a past storm, and now, when it rains, that fear resurfaces, says veterinarian Ann Hohenhaus. You need an unwavering approach. Dogs are creatures of habit, so it will be easier to coax yours out if you have a daily routine that you stick to, even on rainy days. Start with a few minutes of playtime. Then, right near the door, clip on the leash and give him some petting and praise ("Good boy!") as you lead him outside, shielding him with an umbrella. Have a treat in your hand in case he needs extra incentive. (Last resort: Carry him out, if you're capable of it.) Once he does his business, reward him immediately with another treat and quickly head back inside to towel him off.

The more you repeat the routine, the less resistance you'll get. You can also reduce the icky wet feeling with rain gear, if your dog will tolerate it, says vet Lisa Maciorakowski. Try a slicker (Petco Reversible Blue Dog Raincoat, \$15, petco.com), waterproof footwear (Pawz Dog Boots, \$17, petco.com), or even an umbrella-collar combo (Pet Life Umbrella Leash Holder, \$30, dog.com).

Photograph by
John Fulton

Q.
noisy nuisance
My 14-year-old cat sometimes gets restless and howls.

What can I do to calm him?

A.M., via Facebook

A. As cats get older, they can become increasingly anxious and vocal. But that doesn't mean you're forever doomed to sleepless nights. "Sometimes the howling signals discomfort from arthritis, a urinary tract infection, or hyperthyroid disease, so you should book a vet evaluation with lab work," says Maciorakowski. If tests are negative, the culprit is probably plain old age. You may relieve restlessness with a soothing pheromone diffuser, which comes in a spray or collar form (Sentry Cat Calming Collar, \$13, chewy.com). And just in case evening howling stems from hunger pangs, offer a small nightly snack.

Q.
slobber situation
Our two-year-old black British Lab recently started licking everything—pillows, clothing, even himself. Should we be worried?

J.P., via Facebook

A. Puppies and young dogs love to lick objects, in the same way that babies explore with their mouths. It's typically not harmful, but if you're fed up with finding damp socks strewn about, you can try the surprisingly effective step-away method: Whenever the licking starts, instead of yelling or snatching the pillow, simply walk out of the room. (Any attention, even the negative kind, reinforces the behavior.) The habit should subside over time. Another option, with your vet's approval: Spray a (safe, nontoxic) sour-flavored "deterrent" on your dog's fur (Grannick's Bitter Apple, \$11, amazon.com) to break the habit. No luck after a few weeks? Consider scheduling a veterinary visit. The doctor may want to do blood work or evaluate the dog's diet to check for health or nutritional problems, says vet Julie Morris. But most likely the licking is just a phase that you'll have to wait out.

OUR PET EXPERTS

ANN HOHENHAUS, D.V.M., the Animal Medical Center, New York City.

LISA MACIORAKOWSKI, D.V.M., Angell Animal Medical Center, Boston.

JULIE MORRIS, D.V.M., Morris Animal Hospital, Granger, Indiana.

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15 INNOVATIONS THAT CHANGED FAMILY LIFE

Energizer.

TO HONOR **REAL SIMPLE**'S MILESTONE ANNIVERSARY, **ENERGIZER** PRESENTS 15 INNOVATIONS FOR FAMILY LIFE: SMART IDEAS FROM THE PAST DECADE AND A HALF THAT HAVE MADE EVERY DAY EASIER—AND HAVE MADE A POSITIVE IMPACT.

WINNERS NEVER QUIT

The *RS* road test hall of fame

BEST OFFICE ORGANIZER Super Stacked Desk Set

When Poppin's zippy-colored supplies launched in 2012, they took desktops in a (way) cooler direction. The uniform pieces impose instant order—and in various sizes, they can corral paper and paper clips. **TO BUY:** \$55 (stapler not included), poppin.com.

BEST STICK VACUUM Electrolux Ergorapido Plus Brushroll Clean

This dirt-blaster combo—cordless vac plus pop-out handheld—holds its charge for 20 minutes, allowing you to tackle a whole room and smaller spots in one go. **TO BUY:** \$150, bestbuy.com.

BEST BATHROOM HOOKS Command Hooks With Water-Resistant Strips

The latest iteration of *RS*'s favorite adhesive hooks can withstand wet, humid bathrooms—a no-brainer swap for suction cups that slip. **TO BUY:** From \$9 each, command.com for stores.

BEST LABEL MAKER

Brother P-touch PT-H100 Easy Handheld Label Maker

Pro organizers overwhelmingly recommend this label maker for its ultra-clear font and heavy-duty labels. **TO BUY:** \$35, staples.com.



BEST THERMOSTAT Nest Learning Thermostat

The game-changing innovation allows you to input your heating and cooling preferences, and within a week the thermostat automatically adjusts to your schedule. As a result, it's been a cult favorite since its debut nearly four years ago. **TO BUY:** \$249, nest.com.



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BEST TABLETOP FAN AM06 Dyson Cool

Sculptural and sleek, this bladeless model blows all others out of the water, sending out a strong stream of air without any noisy whirring. It's kid- and pet-safe, too. If tipped over, it shuts off automatically. **TO BUY:** \$300 (19½ by 12 inches), dyson.com.

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home

Photographs by Jens Mortensen

15 INNOVATIONS FOR FAMILY LIFE

1 GPS

First used by the military, GPS became available to the public in 2000. Today, it helps save time (and frustration) on everything from navigating your way to your child's new karate class, to finding a nearby coffee shop, to locating a lost device.



2 Interactive Video Games

Featuring everything from handheld motion-detecting devices to full-body control, consoles from the past 15 years have gotten kids (and their parents) off the couch and physically into the game.

3 Text Messaging

Voicemails or often-missed phone calls to remind family members to pick up milk—or someone from sports practice—turned into easy one-liners with the help of text messages, which took off in 2000.



4 Social Networks

From posting videos of your kids, to announcing a new job, to sharing favorite recipes, social networks have completely changed how we share our lives with family and friends (often in 140 characters or less).



5 Wireless Headsets

In 2000, wireless headsets made phone calls more multitask-friendly for busy families—freeing up hands for more important tasks, like holding a fussy baby or washing dishes.

6 Video Chatting

Grandparents, rejoice: Long-distance relatives and friends get a little closer with telecommunications software that enables face-to-face video chats between computers, smartphones, and tablets via the Internet—for free.



7 Smartphones

Offering the ability to check your email, text your teen, browse the Internet, and call your mom—all in once place—smartphones have made us wonder what we ever did without them since their introduction in 2000.

8 E-Readers

While there's still much to love about paper books, the ability to download and carry a library of a thousand-plus titles with you anywhere is a space- and time-saving dream come true (especially during family vacation).



9 USB Flash Drive

Affordable, compact, and easy to use, a portable USB flash drive allows you to store and share documents and data by simply plugging it into any computer's USB port.

10 Cloud-Based Technology

When you're away from your computer but need to access important files (such as medical or a child's school info), cloud computing technology can step in. Instead of storing documents on a laptop, such services can stow them securely within reach, anywhere you have an Internet connection.

11 Camera Phones

Making their debut in 2002, camera phones solved the dilemma of having to tote both a cell phone and a camera every time you left the house. (Who can miss a call from the school nurse or the chance to take pics at a dance recital?)



12 Hybrid Cars

Saving energy and time at the pump, hybrid cars and their inventive battery features proved a smart solution when they gained popularity in the United States starting in 2000.

13 Portable Power

When you're on the go, laptops, smartphones, and tablets make everything easier...unless they've lost their juice. To the rescue: lightweight, portable chargers from Energizer® that bring even the hungriest device back to life.



14 Tablets

More cost-effective than a laptop (and much easier to cuddle up with when reading or watching a film), tablets give families portable, lightweight ways to browse the Internet, watch TV shows, and play games at home or on the go.

15 Energizer® EcoAdvanced™ Battery

Constantly changing batteries slows family time down, but the new **Energizer® EcoAdvanced™ Battery** can help. As the world's first AA battery made from recycled materials (4%), it balances performance with responsible innovation—taking a portion of worn-out batteries and making them into something strong.



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BEST FLOOR CLEANER

Better Life Simply Floored!

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TO BUY: \$7, cleanhappens.com.

BEST FABRIC SOFTENER

Caldrea Rosewater Driftwood Fabric Softener

It keeps delicates static-free and moonlights as a wrinkle releaser. (Mix 1 tablespoon with 2 cups hot water.)

TO BUY: \$15, caldrea.com.

BEST ERGONOMIC DUSTER

Baseboard Buddy

A must-have in RS cleaning stories since its 2011 introduction, this long-reach tool, shaped to fit the curves of molding, keeps you from having to stoop or stretch.

TO BUY: \$20, baseboardbuddy.com.

BEST MILD ABRASIVE POWDER

Bar Keepers Friend

Created 133 years ago, this rust remover and mineral-deposit eraser still outshines all the others. It's the pros' pick for keeping tile and faucets looking new.

TO BUY: \$5, williams-sonoma.com.



BEST MULTIPURPOSE CLEANER

Dr. Bronner's Castile Liquid Soap

There's barely anything this biodegradable organic soap can't do. Use it to clean counters and make floors sparkle. (Mix about a tablespoon in $\frac{1}{2}$ gallon of warm water.)

TO BUY: \$18, drbronner.com.

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AND WINDOW
FRAMES, TOO.

BEST DISH SOAP

Dawn Ultra Platinum Power Clean Dishwashing Liquid

With unequaled grease-cutting power, just a drop or two can wash an entire sinkful of dishes.

TO BUY: \$2.70, walmart.com.

BEST LAUNDRY DETERGENT

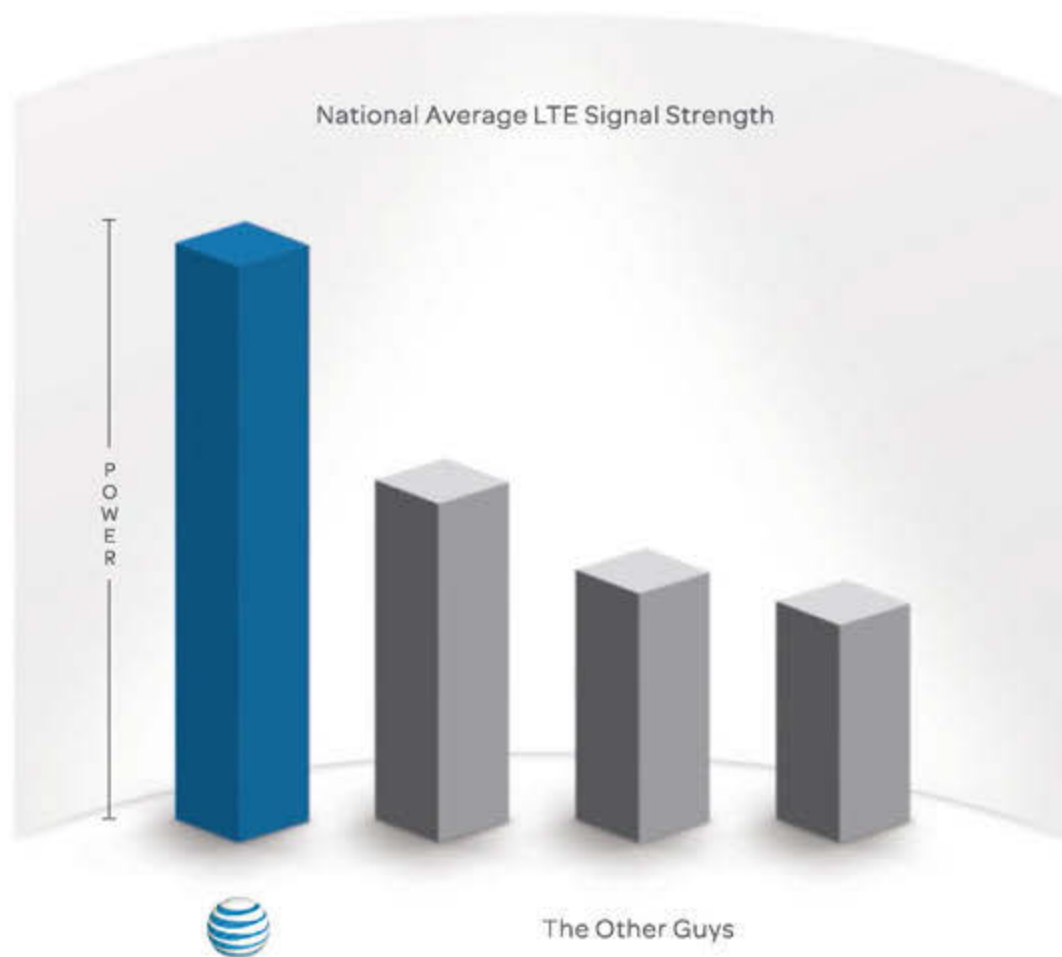
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CleanPath Antibacterial Multi-Surface Cleaner

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BEST PAPER TOWELS

Viva Vantage Towels
Clothlike strength makes these the gold standard. A single sheet, rinsed and wrung out repeatedly, can clean an entire kitchen. **TO BUY:** \$2, target.com.

BEST STORAGE CONTAINERS

Our Shoe Box

Stackable, with an easy-to-lift (and lock) lid, this low-priced (under \$2!) shoe bin is also an ideal way to stash office supplies, lightbulbs, and hats and gloves. **TO BUY:** \$1.90, containerstore.com.

BEST CLOSET ROD

LED Closet Rod

This light-up, screw-in design illuminates a closet's dark corners better than overhead bulbs and stick-ons. It's also energy-efficient; it turns itself off after a few minutes. **TO BUY:** \$48, shopaclosetdesign.com.

TOSS THIS
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COVER IN
THE WASH.
(BUT SKIP THE
DRYER.)



BEST AIRTIGHT CONTAINERS

Oxo Pop Container 10-Piece Set

With push-button lids and curved corners for smooth pouring, these clear, stackable bins have been a kitchen and pantry staple since 2007—and have played a starring role in practically every RS organizing story. Use them to store dry goods, nail polish, small toys, and more. **TO BUY:** \$100, oxo.com.

BEST SCUFF-MARK FIX

Mr. Clean Magic Eraser

Wet this melamine-foam sponge and swipe to remove grime. It's a miracle worker on marked-up walls and dirty tubs and tile. **TO BUY:** \$4 for two, soap.com.

BEST MICROFIBER CLOTHS

e-cloth Home Cleaning Set

This machine-washable set is the only one that offers eight color-coded cloths in various textures to give the best results on different surfaces. **TO BUY:** \$40, eclcloth.com.

BEST ADJUSTABLE DUSTER

Casabella Quick Dust

The experts' secret weapon for keeping ceiling fans and out-of-the-way spots debris-free, this hinged-head duster extends to 36 inches. **TO BUY:** \$10, casabella.com.



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HOME



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begin!



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10 REAL SIMPLE RULES FOR...

Foolproof Decorating



1
Palette math: Choose one color for 60 percent of the room, a second color for 30 percent, and a third color that's brighter than the others for the remaining 10 percent.



A SMALL AREA RUG HELPS DEFINE THE SPACE.

2
A spot to sit + mirror + table (or shelf) = instant “finished” foyer.

3
Switch up shapes. If the bulk of your living-room furniture is boxy, choose a round coffee table, ottoman, or side tables for balance.

4
The **ideal coffee table** is two-thirds as wide as the sofa and a couple of inches lower than the seats (typically 14 to 16 inches high).

5
Instead of installing them directly above the window, **hang curtains high**—between the ceiling and the top of the window—and your space will feel a lot loftier. (And don't let the bottoms pool. They should just graze the floor.)

6
Mount a mirror opposite a window. It's the best way to **bounce light** around and create the illusion of a bigger room.

7
A rug should never float in the middle of a floor. Place it **under at least the front feet** of a chair, a couch, or a bed to anchor it.

8
Throw-pillow math: two 20-inch square pillows in a matching bold pattern, one on each end of the sofa; two 16-inch pillows in a coordinating solid color, overlapping the square pillows; and one lumbar with a subtle pattern (like a pinstripe) in the middle.

9
You'll never mess up **pattern mixing** if you combine bold, large-scale prints with subtle, smaller-scale prints in complementary colors.

10
Think in threes. Similar-sized accessories on a shelf or a table look better grouped in odd numbers. Even amounts can feel too uniform and stiff.

Written by Stephanie Sisco and Rachael Weiner

THE GUIDE
home

IDEAL HEIGHT TO HANG A MIRROR: 60 INCHES FROM THE FLOOR TO THE CENTER OF THE MIRROR.



THIS PATTERN TRICK ISN'T ONLY FOR FABRIC—IT APPLIES TO RUGS AND FURNITURE, TOO.



WANT MORE STYLING SECRETS?

Find 16 ways to make a small space seem larger at realsimple.com/designtricks.

BOTTOM LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID PRINCE; TOP RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW WILLIAMS; MIRROR: CYPRESS BONE INLAY MIRROR, \$295, FOR SMALL, SERENANDILLY.COM; SIDE TABLE: LINC BLACK MANGO-WOOD TABLE, \$149, GRATEANDBARREL.COM; PILLOWS (FROM FRONT TO BACK): COTTON THAI IKAT BOLSTER, \$185; PHULKARI INDIGO DECORATIVE PILLOW, \$175; POPPY INDIGO DECORATIVE PILLOW, \$175; JOHNROBshaw.COM.



The Spectacular Science of Suds

- Did you know High Efficiency washers make over 100 decisions per cycle? Load balance, suds management, and temperature control can save 10 gallons of water and 25 minutes per load. Basically the smart Wphone of appliances!
- Most HE machine owners don't realize that their detergent can be to blame for long cycles, sudsy clothing, and dinginess. Using HE detergent designed for HE washers can result in cleaner clothes in shorter cycles.
- Tide is proud to introduce a new standard for high efficiency, HE Turbo. For a fast and powerful clean, use **Tide HE Turbo** and see the difference.

What Would You Do With 25 Extra Minutes?

Have you ever noticed that your washer says it has 7 minutes to go for over 25 minutes? This actually could be caused by too many suds from your detergent, adding an additional rinse cycle to your machine. **Tide HE Turbo Detergent** is designed to solve this problem, with quick dissolving suds that **save up to 25 minutes to get you back to your day.**

SPEND YOUR TIME:

1. Crafting with the kids
2. Reaching out to an old friend
3. Reading a book
4. Spring cleaning
5. Pampering yourself



Learn more about Tide's cutting-edge technology at tide.com/he.

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SAVE UP TO 25 MINUTES IN YOUR HIGH EFFICIENCY WASH CYCLE.
HE Turbo's Smart Suds™ collapse faster to save up to 25 minutes a wash in your high efficiency machine. Look for HE Turbo on Tide.

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*Based on co-marketing agreements.



WHAT
THE
BEST
MORNINGS
ARE
MADE OF.



Start your day on the plus side of delicious with Quaker® Real Medleys®. Try new Summer Berry Granola as a delicious snack or topping that's loaded with crunchy clusters plus real fruit. And there's new Banana Walnut Oatmeal+, complete with super grains and packed with bananas and crunchy nuts. **#QuakerUp**

Fashion + Beauty

15 YEARS OF MAKING LIFE EASIER: (SOME OF) OUR ALL-TIME BEST
TIPS, TRICKS, SHORTCUTS, AND ADVICE



PROP STYLING BY NOEMI BONAZZI; HAIR BY MARK ANTHONY; MAKEUP BY GEORGINA BILLINGTON

Photograph by Stephen Lewis

BRIGHTENING THAT'S LIGHT YEARS AHEAD

Introducing **New StriVectin Intensive Illuminating Serum** powered by NIA-114 technology and breakthrough brightening actives. This high potency, clinically proven treatment significantly enhances skin clarity for a radiant, even looking complexion.

86% saw brighter skin*

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15 YEARS OF BEAUTY BREAKTHROUGHS— AN A-TO-Z GUIDE

Written by Genevieve Monsma
Photographs by Yasu+Junko

ANTIOXIDANTS IN SKIN CARE

In the early 2000s, antioxidants—such as vitamins C and E, idebenone, and green-tea extract—began cropping up in serums and creams. These substances neutralize free radicals (unstable molecules), which damage skin's collagen and accelerate wrinkling. It was later discovered that some of these antioxidants (like vitamin C) even “help diminish dark spots,” says Elizabeth K. Hale, a New York City dermatologist, which is why most docs now consider them a cornerstone of any anti-aging regimen. Try: SkinCeuticals C E Ferulic (\$157, skinceuticals.com) and Elizabeth Arden Prevage Anti-Aging Daily Serum (\$162, elizabetharden.com).

BLOW-DRY BARS

Five years ago, Los Angeles-based hairstylist Alli Webb joined forces with her brother and husband to create Drybar, today a nationwide chain of 40 blow-out-only boutiques that promise women good hair days for less than \$50. With revenue growing from \$8.7 million in 2011 to \$40 million in 2013, Drybar also earned a slew of competitors. Some luxury salons (where a blow-dry can cost \$75 and up) have opened lower-priced, blow-out-only outposts. “I’m so proud of the company we built,” says Webb, “and how we have been able to make women feel beautiful and confident.”



CLEANSING BRUSHES

Originally developed for in-office and in-spa treatments, the Clarisonic brush, which burst onto the skin-care scene 11 years ago, became so popular among professionals for its ability to provide deep cleaning and help smooth the surface of skin that the company decided to sell it to consumers. L'Oréal bought the company in 2011, and the cleansing devices are now distributed in 45 countries. Clarisonic's best-seller? The Mia 2 (\$149, clarisonic.com). New devices that offer similar results: the Clinique Sonic System Purifying Cleansing Brush (\$90, clinique.com) and the Foreo Luna T-Sonic Cleansing System and Anti-Aging System (\$199, ulta.com).

DOVE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL BEAUTY

In 2004 Dove debuted ads featuring real women, not models. Last year, on the 10th anniversary of the campaign, Unilever released the results of a new poll it says indicates a change in women's attitudes toward their bodies—perhaps influenced by this more realistic imagery. In the poll, 62 percent of women reported that they now dictate what they consider to be beautiful, whereas 10 years ago only 23 percent said they felt this way. **Progress.**

E. MAX

Chew on this: E. Max, a cementable glass-ceramic material, allows cosmetic dentists to create very strong, thin veneers “without the need to shave down teeth prior to application,” says Michael Apa, an aesthetic dentist in New York City. Think beautiful, non-Bugs Bunny teeth.



“FIVE-FREE” NAIL LACQUERS

In 2006 consumer pressure (thank you, Internet) motivated a major nail-polish brand to remove from its formulas a “toxic trio” of potentially harmful ingredients: toluene, dibutyl phthalate (DBP), and formaldehyde. This eventually led many more companies to do the same and also become “five-free,” taking formaldehyde resin and camphor out of their products, too. This ushered in an age of increased transparency in cosmetic ingredients that made many companies, even those outside the beauty industry, rethink formulas. (See also: endocrine disruptors, like BPA, formerly found in baby bottles.) Try “five-free” Smith & Cult Nail Lacquers (\$18 each, smithandcult.com).

GROWTH FACTORS

Vitamin A, found in Retin-A and over-the-counter retinol, has been an ingredient darling among dermatologists for decades for its ability to boost collagen production and make skin tighter and smoother. The downside? It can cause irritation. Hence the introduction of skin serums and moisturizers featuring growth factors (sometimes labeled as “epidermal growth factors” or “stem-cell extracts”), which stimulate healthy cell production without stinging. They're ideal for people with sensitive skin, but they don't always come cheap. (Some potions will set you back hundreds of dollars.) Find growth factors in products by ReVive (reviveskincare.com), Lifeline Skin Care (lifelineskincare.com), and SkinMedica (skinmedica.com).

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THE HOW

Sharpenable pencil with natural wax for the finest, hair-like strokes. Triangle grooming brush to blend and soften for a natural finish.

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Brows are shaped and filled with impeccable precision.

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Marloes is wearing New Eye Studio® Brow Precise™ in Blonde.

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HYALURONIC ACID

Craving instant gratification from your skin-care routine? Few ingredients provide it more effectively than the currently hot hyaluronic acid. “Hyaluronic acid improves the skin’s ability to retain moisture, making it appear plumper and less lined immediately,” says Kathleen Jennings, a beauty blogger and the founder of the BeautyNow app. Two hyaluronic acid-based moisturizers to try: Ling Dual Moisture Emulsion (\$68, lingskincare.com) and Peter Thomas Roth Viz 1000 (\$65, peterthomasroth.com).

JERGENS NATURAL GLOW DAILY MOISTURIZER

Points for being first—and still great after all these years! Introduced in 2005, this glow-getting lotion is applied like regular body moisturizer, but it produces a subtle tint within days, minus much mess. Why it works so well: It contains erythrulose and DHA, two tinting agents that work together to produce a more realistic and gradual color than traditional tanners, and it has an emollient base to ensure a smooth and even application. Fun fact: Jergens calculated that during year one in stores, an average of 11 bottles were sold per minute.

INJECTABLES

Needle-based noninvasive procedures have exploded in popularity over the past 15 years. The first type, neuromodulators, which include Botox and Dysport, have been injected about 700 percent more than they were in 2000 and have “changed the face—pun intended—of cosmetic surgery, by being able to relax wrinkles without downtime,” says Paul Jarrod Frank, a cosmetic dermatologist in New York City. The second type, fillers, such as Restylane, Juvederm, and Belotero, which often contain hyaluronic acid, “allow us to literally fill in wrinkles and revolumize and lift skin on contact,” says Frank.

KERATIN TREATMENTS

For women who wake to a headful of frizz daily, “keratin treatments have been a lifesaver,” says Los Angeles celebrity stylist Marcus Francis. How they work: A keratin (protein) solution is applied to the hair, then sealed into strands with a flatiron. The result: hair that’s shinier and smoother, easier to blow-dry, and far less vulnerable to humidity. The effects typically last up to four months. While the treatment is not without detractors, due to its unproven but possible toxicity, many stylists maintain that for those who grapple with fierce frizz, there is no better remedy.



MAKEUP THAT LASTS (AND LASTS)

“Volatile silicones and oils have given us greatly improved long-wear makeup,” says celebrity makeup artist Troy Surratt, who learned a lot about cosmetic chemistry while developing his recently launched line. These ingredients work by allowing for a smoother, less flaky application that leaves behind loads of glorious pigment. Find them in: Giorgio Armani Maestro Foundation (\$64, giorgioarmanibeauty-usa.com) and Maybelline New York Eye Studio Color Tattoo Cream Gel Shadow (\$7, drugstores).

LATISSE

Introduced in 2009, this lash-enhancing solution is “revolutionary in its ability to grow lashes and eyebrows,” says Francesca Fusco, a New York City dermatologist. The active ingredient, bimatoprost (first used to treat people with glaucoma or ocular hypertension), works by extending the growth cycle of lashes so that they stay put on the lids longer, creating a fuller effect. “What really excites me about this ingredient, though,” says Fusco, “is that ongoing clinical studies indicate that it’s promising for growing scalp hair, which would be a game changer for anyone with hair loss.”



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NAIL ART

You need look no further than Instagram for proof that nail art is a thing. (To wit: The nail industry took in \$8.3 billion in 2013.) Better yet: You don't even have to go to a salon to decorate your digits. The proliferation of such items as home gel-manicure kits (see page 182 for more info) and intricate nail decals have made being a polish Picasso a snap. Beginners can test the trend with a negative-space mani, in which a portion of each nail is left bare (for example, a half-moon above the cuticle) or by layering a glitter or polka-dotted topcoat over a creamy color.



PEPTIDES

As with growth factors (see G, page 92), one benefit of skin-plumping peptides, another innovative anti-aging ingredient, is that, unlike topical vitamin A, they don't seem to cause irritation. Among the first to use peptides in skin care was Olay, featuring it in its Regenerist line, which launched in 2007. While the Regenerist products have undergone updates, they still contain the original peptide complex, which is suitable for almost all. And Regenerist Micro-Sculpting Cream (\$26 at drugstores) is still Olay's best-selling product.

ONLINE BEAUTY

Remember when you had to travel for access to small, innovative, but not widely available brands, like Eve Lom and It Cosmetics? Or find a makeup artist at the mall who could teach you how to wing eyeliner? Wow, how times have changed! Thanks to virtual emporiums, like sephora.com and ulta.com, and style sites, such as refinery29.com and Time Inc.'s own mimichatter.com, all the tools and tutorials you need are (literally) at your fingertips.



Q-TIPS PRECISION TIPS

The cotton swab has been a staple for makeup pros forever, but the fluffy tip made it challenging for the average Jane to wield for cosmetic purposes. In 2011, in response to women's demand for a more makeup-friendly design, Q-Tips introduced a two-sided cotton-swab stick with tapered ends (\$3.50 for 170, at drugstores) that makes applying eyeliner, erasing lipstick bleeds, and cleaning up polish smudges a cinch.

ROOT TOUCH-UPS

Put this in the "Why didn't we think of this sooner?" category. Women have embraced the influx of temporary root touch-up products, which—whether sprinkled, sprayed, or painted onto roots—conceal them until washed out. (Think concealer for hair.) Three that win top marks: TouchBack Instant Root Touch-Up (\$30, ulta.com), Color Wow Root Cover Up (\$34.50, colorwowhair.com), and Rita Hazan Root Concealer (\$25, ritahazan.com).

SPRAY-ON BODY LOTION

After polling U.S. women and discovering that 80 million (what?) were not using body lotion daily, because they didn't have the patience to wait for it to dry, Vaseline introduced Spray & Go Moisturizer (\$7 at drugstores) in 2013, which goes on as a thin mist that dries in seconds. That same year, St. Ives launched Fresh Hydration lotions, with similar properties. A boon for busy women everywhere.



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BLISSFULLY
INTO
BERRY.

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THE PLUMS

TRUER, CRISPER COLOR
from our rich, pure pigments.

CREAMIER, MORE SUMPTUOUS FEEL
from our nourishing honey nectar.

Jourdan wears **Blissful Berry**.

IN 8 PROVOCATIVE PLUM SHADES. 80 SHADES IN ALL.

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TEXTURIZING SPRAYS

Bumble and bumble's Surf Spray (\$27, bumbleandbumble.com) hit shores in 2001, giving even the landlocked an opportunity to score the effects of a day at the beach year-round. Bumble's salt spray launched a whole category of texturizers that produce realistic-looking waves. New ones to try: Suave Professionals Sea Mineral Infusion Texturizing Sea Salt Spray (\$5 at drugstores) and Redken Fashion Waves 07 Sea Salt Spray (\$19, redken.com for salons).



VANIQA

For women with unwanted facial hair, the FDA's approval of Vaniqa in 2000 was a godsend. This prescription cream blocks an enzyme needed for hair growth, thereby minimizing annoying facial fuzz.

WHITENING AT HOME

Whitening strips (we're looking at you, Crest Whitestrips) are impregnated with a peroxide gel and stay on the teeth for approximately 20 minutes. "No muss, no fuss," says Marc Lowenberg, a New York City cosmetic dentist. And at-home whitening technology just keeps getting better—meaning faster and less sensitivity inducing. Brands such as Supersmile, Go Smile, and GLO Science have gotten in on the act, and Crest has upgraded its offerings with no-slip strips in 2009 and a one-hour express kit in 2013.

UVA-BLOCKING SUN PROTECTION

The early 2000s saw a major evolution in sunscreen formulations, as companies moved from making SPF-only products, which block just skin-burning UVB rays, to offering broad-spectrum protection. The term, created by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 2011, means that a formula blocks both UVB and UVA rays (which contribute to cancer and aging) and has an SPF of 15 or higher. Two M.D.-approved broad-spectrum picks: La Roche-Posay Anthelios 60 Ultra-Light Sunscreen Fluid (\$30, laroche-posay.us) and Neutrogena Ultra-Sheer Liquid Daily Sunscreen Broad Spectrum SPF 70 (\$13 at drugstores).

XYLITOL

Studied in Finland in the 1970s for its dental benefits, xylitol, a sugar alcohol, finally made its way Stateside in the 2000s. "Used as a sweetener in items such as chewing gum, toothpaste, and mouth rinse, it prevents tooth decay by inhibiting the growth of the bacteria that causes cavities," says dentist Michael Apa.



WHAT'S YOUR
FAVORITE
BEAUTY
INNOVATION?

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YSL TOUCHE ÉCLAT FOR ALL WOMEN

In 1992 YSL introduced its best-selling, iconic Touche Éclat highlighting pen (\$41, yslbeauty.us.com). In 2012 the company offered six new shades to better meet the needs of the changing complexion of the United States, bringing the current total to 12. Now, if only everyone else would follow suit.

ZIT ZAPPERS

Bad news: The number of adult women suffering from acne in the United States is soaring. **Good news:** The skin-care industry has responded by creating adult-only acne-fighting options that are gentle to skin and also anti-aging. Some to try: Murad Anti-Aging Acne Regimen (\$120, murad.com) and Dermalogica Medibac Clearing Skin Kit (\$42, dermalogica.com). And Proactiv, the teen acne staple, has come out with Proactiv+, geared toward more "mature" skin types.



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New Vaseline® Intensive Care™
relieves very dry skin
from the first application
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5 SECRETS OF LUXE LOCKS



OVER THE YEARS, WE'VE LEARNED A THING OR TWO ABOUT GETTING LUXE LOCKS. CELEBRATE REAL SIMPLE'S 15TH ANNIVERSARY AND ELEVATE YOUR HAIRCARE ROUTINE WITH THESE TIME-TESTED HAIR SECRETS AND **PANTENE EXPERT**, HAIRCARE'S MOST AWARDED COLLECTION.



1 WORK TOGETHER

For just-stepped-out-of-the-salon hair, choose products that work together as a system. The **Pantene Expert Dry Defy** and **Pantene Expert Fade Defy** lines each feature a shampoo, a conditioner, and a styling product. Use all three to intensify the effects and deliver the best results.

2 PREP SCHOOL

Do your homework before visiting the salon for a new hair hue. Coloring healthy hair can lead to a more desirable outcome, so prep your hair with **Fade Defy Vibrant Color Shampoo** and **Conditioner**, for color to be placed on a strong foundation.

3 OUTSMART THE DRYER

Heat styling is one of hair's toughest adversaries. Apply **Expert Dry Defy Intense Hydrating Shampoo**, **Conditioner**, and **Velvet Crème Infusion** to thwart dryer damage and fortify hair with intense hydration.

4 RAISE THE ROOTS

Over-conditioning your roots can suck the life out of your style. For soft, shiny hair with tons of body, work **Expert Dry Defy Intense Hydrating Conditioner** through hair from end to root (instead of the other way around).

5 GO FOR GLOSS

Without healthy shine, colored hair falls flat. **Expert Fade Defy Color Magnifying Gloss** is a colorist's secret weapon. Use it regularly to prevent damage and keep your color beautifully brilliant.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE AWARD-WINNING PANTENE EXPERT COLLECTION AT PANTENE.COM/EXPERT.

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Pantene's Expert Collection not only helps restore smoothness and shine, but helps erase damage in just one wash.

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*Magazine awards in 2013 from top US print publications with award programs.

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BEST EYE CREAM

Mario Badescu Hyaluronic Eye Cream
Dermatologists agree: Nothing smooths—and soothes—dry under-eye skin better.
TO BUY: \$18, mariobadescu.com.



BEST FACE WASH

Dr Dennis Gross Skincare All-in-One Cleansing Foam
Testers of all skin types say this wash does seemingly everything: It cleans, tones, and softens skin while keeping breakouts at bay.
TO BUY: \$36, dgskinicare.com.



BEST FOUNDATION

Lancôme Teint Idole Ultra 24H Foundation
Eight years of research went into creating this silky, buildable base, which hides every last blemish and dries down to a matte (never flat) finish that lasts all day. In 28 shades.
TO BUY: \$45.50, lancome-usa.com.



BEST TOOTHPASTE

Colgate Enamel Health Whitening Toothpaste
The mother of all multitasking toothpastes has fluoride and silica, so it strengthens enamel while brightening teeth.
TO BUY: \$3.40 at drugstores.



BEST BLUSH

Nars Blush in Orgasm
This peachy pink powder flatters every skin tone. Due to its immense popularity, the shade is now available as a lip gloss and a nail polish—and is a best seller in every form.
TO BUY: \$30, narscosmetics.com.



BEST CONDITIONER

Nexxus New York ProMend Restoring Conditioner
You can't beat the smell (a light floral), feel (a creamy lather), and results (smoother hair) that you get from this two-time road-test winner.
TO BUY: \$17, drugstore.com.



BEST LIP BALM

Fresh Sugar Lip Treatment SPF 15
Beloved among staffers and beauty editors, this balm's silky texture layers well under or over lipstick.
TO BUY: \$22.50, fresh.com.

Photographs by Jens Mortensen



SOME MOMENTS DESERVE AN AUDIENCE

Bald eagles soaring between rugged peaks. Meadows of wildflowers dancing in the wind. And sunrises that paint the sky like a canvas. This is a world where wonderful things happen. We just have to be there when they do.

Get the guide at [Colorado.com](https://colorado.com)



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WINNERS NEVER QUIT

BEST BODY LOTION

Burt's Bees Radiance Body Lotion

This all-natural fluid sinks in fast, has light-reflecting mica that camouflages small skin flaws—and costs less than \$10. Score! **TO BUY:** \$9, burtsbees.com.



BEST EYELINER

Yves Saint Laurent Effet Faux Cils Crème D'Eyeliner

Consistently a go-to for makeup pros, this creamy waterproof liner glides onto lids without skipping or smudging and lasts all day.

TO BUY: \$30, yslbeautyus.com.



BEST HAIR SPRAY

Moroccanoil Luminous Hairspray

And then came argan oil. Infused with the now ubiquitous ingredient, this superlative, delicious-smelling spritz works on every hair type—and imparts glossy shine.

TO BUY: \$22.20, moroccanoil.com.



TIP If your gel liner doesn't go on like it used to, toss the container into a sealed plastic bag and pop it into a bowl of very warm water for a few minutes. The heat will help soften the formula back to its original consistency.



BEST BODY SCRUB

Lather Bamboo Lemongrass Foaming Body Scrub

This innovative scrub is made from powdered bamboo that foams up like soap when massaged onto wet skin. Bonus: It washes off clean, with no slippery residue on skin—or the tub.

TO BUY: \$39, lather.com.



BEST SELF-TANNER

Clarins Self Tanning Instant Gel

A two-time road-test winner, this iconic formula is repeatedly lauded for its mess-free application (it goes on clear) and natural-looking finish. The glow-extending extracts are a major plus.

TO BUY: \$37, clarinsusa.com.



BEST DRY SHAMPOO

Arrojo ReFinish Dry Shampoo

It's not just a dry shampoo. Infused with aloe and ginger, it soaks up oil, builds volume, and leaves hair soft.

TO BUY: \$25, arrojonyc.com.



BEST FACE MOISTURIZER

Laura Mercier Mega Moisture Crème SPF 15

This SPF-laced super lotion scores with makeup pros and dermatologists for its fragrance-free, noncomedogenic formula that primes as well as it protects and treats.

TO BUY: \$53, lauramercier.com.



BEST EVERYDAY SUNSCREEN

Clinique Super City Block

Testers loved this classic formula in 2006 and remain loyal because it checks all of the boxes: heavy on protection, lightweight on skin, easy to blend, and doesn't clog pores.

TO BUY: \$23, clinique.com.

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FOR MORE RESTED, YOUNGER-LOOKING SKIN.

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- Essential Oil & Lavender

- in just 1 week, skin appears refreshed, revitalized, smoother, and feels firmer
- works while you sleep when skin is most receptive



#sleepwiththis



garnierusa.com

WINNERS NEVER QUIT

BEST HAND CREAM

Aveda Hand Relief Moisturizing Creme

Since its launch, more than 15 years ago, this best-selling salve remains number one among testers for its nonslippery, hand-softening formula.

TO BUY: \$24, aveda.com.

BEST MASCARA

Benefit They're Real! Mascara

Masses of mascaras land on her desk, but our beauty director swears by this lash-lengthening, lifting formula that never, ever clumps.

TO BUY: \$23, benefitcosmetics.com.

BEST LIPSTICK

Tom Ford Lip Color in True Coral

Although it's a relative newcomer to the category (it launched in 2010), this buttery indulgence is already a cult hit among beauty editors because of its smooth application and lasting formula that doesn't flake or feather.

TO BUY: \$50, tomford.com.

BEST SHAMPOO

L'Oréal Paris EverPure Sulfate-Free Moisture Shampoo

When it comes to preserving color and keeping hair strong, pros turn to this gentle drugstore pick.

TO BUY: \$7 at drugstores.

THE GUIDE
beauty



THE FRESH SCENT COMES FROM ROSEMARY AND JUNIPER ESSENTIAL OILS.

BEST SOAP

Dove White Beauty Bar

Introduced in 1957, this national treasure cannot be topped for its ability to leave every inch of skin—from face to feet—gloriously supple, softly scented, and never tight or squeaky.

TO BUY: \$3.10 for two, target.com.

BEST NAIL POLISH

Essie Ridge Filling Base Coat

Yes, that's right. Praised by our ever pragmatic testers for its nail-smoothing abilities, this milky base can also be worn solo for a "better than buff" finish.

TO BUY: \$8.50, essie.com.

BEST BODY CREAM

Kiehl's Creme de Corps Whipped Body Butter

The unassuming yellow tub has become a family favorite among readers, thanks to its rich, fast-absorbing moisturizers, like squalene, that don't leave skin sticky.

TO BUY: \$38, kiehls.com.

BEST DEODORANT

Tom's of Maine Long Lasting Natural Deodorant

This three-time victor repeatedly wins over even the sweatiest skeptics with its odor-repelling natural formula.

TO BUY: \$5, amazon.com.

BRIGHT IDEAS

OFFERS

EVENTS

FINDS

GIVEAWAYS



SIMPLY DELICIOUS PUDDING

Remember pudding? Good pudding. Real pudding. Pudding made with real ingredients like the ones you can find in your kitchen: rice, eggs, milk, and sugar. If you believe in pudding made right, you'll love all Kozy Shack® Pudding varieties—from original rice to tapioca and chocolate. Explore them all at kozyshack.com.



MEET THE LIFESTYLERS

Keep up with the tastemakers and trendsetters behind the brand you love! Go to our Lifestylers hub and follow us on social media for an inside look at the latest doings and obsessions of the RS Marketing team.

LIFESTYLERS BLOG: See what we're loving, discovering, and obsessed with every week

BRIGHT IDEAS: Check out exclusive advertiser offers, events, finds, and giveaways

FACEBOOK: Stay up-to-date with our favorite tips and special offers

TWITTER: Get our newest offers and the scoop on upcoming events

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Bookmark us today at rslifestylers.com.



SPRING TREND: CASUAL COMFORT

Cast aside your winter boots and stifling shoes for trend-setting and comfy Pampa by San Antonio Shoemakers. These wedges are the perfect accessory for your spring wardrobe, with supple leather straps, a dainty toe loop, and a suede foot bed for all day wear. Visit SASshoes.com to find a retail location near you!

How to get BIG-TIME SHINE in just 15 minutes

Give winter's lifeless locks a spring awakening with high-wattage shine. Freshen your hair as well as your day **in two easy steps:**

1



STYLE Apply a small amount of **NEXXUS Oil Infinite Nourishing Hair Oil** to damp hair, focusing on the ends for maximum nourishment.



2



FINISH After blow drying, a spritz of **TRESemmé Illuminating Shine Spray** will leave hair smooth and full of shine.



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HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS

What to wear for all occasions

(Well, at least the important ones.)

TEMPER THE BLING
Add a dramatic necklace or earrings, not both.

DO YOUR RECON
Browse the venue's website to gauge how decked out you should get.

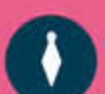
2

THE OCCASION				
BAPTISM, BAR MITZVAH, OR ANOTHER RELIGIOUS CEREMONY	BLACK-TIE WEDDING OR CHARITY GALA	COCKTAIL PARTY, ENGAGEMENT PARTY, AND MOST WEDDINGS	HOLIDAY PARTY, DINNER PARTY, OR "FESTIVE ATTIRE" EVENT	OUTDOOR WEDDING
IN A WORD				
DEMURE	ELEGANT	FANCY	FUN	COLORFUL
WHAT TO WEAR				
Rely on a pretty DAYTIME DRESS , maybe in a pastel or a floral, or a SUIT paired with feminine underpinnings and accents. Avoid anything low cut or clingy, and cover up sleeveless styles.	While etiquette rules are softening on the question of length, you're best off with a TEA- OR FLOOR-LENGTH GOWN . A column or an A-line is most sophisticated. Another option is a FORMAL SUIT . Think tuxedos, shimmery fabrics, and ornate details.	Time for a COCKTAIL DRESS (duh). Choose from a classic LBD, or stand out in a jewel-tone or a pastel. Or mix it up with DRESSY SEPARATES , like a beaded shell and a brocade skirt.	These occasions let you push the limits on glitz and color. So, in essence, almost anything goes. Show some razzle-dazzle with a STATEMENT NECKLACE that wows. Pair it with a vibrantly colored dress or even a SILKY BLOUSE and BOLD PRINTED PANTS .	Splash out with a FLOWY SUNDRESS , a GLAM MAXI , or a CHEERY SHIFT . Instead of black, pick a shade that complements the natural surroundings, like yellow, blue, or coral.
KEEP IN MIND				
When the reception immediately follows a BAR MITZVAH or a BAT MITZVAH and there's no time to change into something dressier, wear a cocktail dress with a jacket or a wrap at the temple.	If the invitation says, " BLACK TIE OPTIONAL ," you can feel free to loosen up. If you don't own a long gown, you can don a knee-length cocktail dress, but it should still be considered red-carpet formal.	Stay away from super-short styles. To test if a hemline is appropriate, stand with your hands at your sides. THE HEM SHOULDN'T BE HIGHER THAN YOUR FINGERTIPS .	Worried about overdoing it around a more low-key crowd? SPORT A DRESS-UP/DRESS-DOWN HYBRID —for instance, an embellished top, heels, and jeans.	STICK WITH SHOES WITH FLAT SOLES . Try beaded wedges, gold sandals, or embellished ballet slippers—to keep you steady on grass or sand.

THE GUIDE
fashion

ICONS BY KATIE FIELD

Illustrations by Eight Hour Day

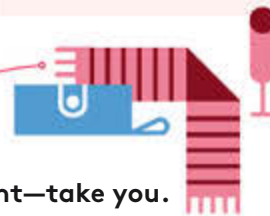
				
THE OCCASION				
 BRIDAL OR BABY SHOWER	 JOB INTERVIEW	 FAMILY GET-TOGETHER, BARBECUE, OR BIRTHDAY PARTY	 FUNERAL OR WAKE	 BUSINESS DINNER, WORK PARTY, OR NETWORKING EVENT
IN A WORD				
LADYLIKE	CLASSIC	CASUAL	RESPECTFUL	POLISHED
WHAT TO WEAR				
Choose a FEMININE DRESS in a bright color or a sweet patterned SKIRT with a CARDIGAN . Flats and heels are equally welcome.	PUMPS AND A TAILORED SUIT (pants or a skirt) still tend to be the standard for most corporate companies. Avoid jangly jewelry—it's too distracting.	Go laid-back with a pair of NICE JEANS , a STRIPED TOP , and STYLISH SNEAKERS or BALLET FLATS .	A safe bet is a PANTSUIT or a KNEE-LENGTH DRESS with a CARDIGAN . Jewelry should be quiet and refined. Think pearl studs.	Opt for a STEP-UP FROM WHAT YOU WEAR AT THE OFFICE . Try a glittery necklace with your suit, or a skirt and heels instead of trousers and flats. Still, conservative is the name of the game.
KEEP IN MIND				
A bridal shower is like a wedding: WEARING WHITE SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR THE BRIDE . And while black isn't forbidden, it can come off as somber at a joyous event.	If you're interviewing in a field like DESIGN , MEDIA , or TECHNOLOGY , a suit can make you seem out of touch. But veering too trendy or casual can also be off-putting. OPT FOR SLEEK, CLEAN PIECES , like a structured sheath or a pencil skirt and a cropped jacket.	DON'T GET TOO COMFORTABLE . Make it look as if you put in some effort and leave the yoga pants, graphic tees, and beat-up trainers at home. TAKE A CUE FROM THE HOST . If she's always dressed to the nines, follow suit with a simple dress and flats or boots.	 BLACK IS NOT MANDATORY . You can convey the solemnity of the event with dark neutrals, like navy, charcoal, and forest green, or even a dark and discreet pattern.	For a casual outing (company picnic, charity 3K run), dress as you would if it wasn't a work function, but SKIP ANYTHING QUESTIONABLE . That means no to clothing that is revealing, ripped, or emblazoned with potentially eyebrow-raising graphics.



WHAT TO WEAR: TRAVEL EDITION

If you pack these five smart pieces, you'll be covered wherever the day—and night—take you.

- 1. Jersey dress.** Because you can throw it on whenever you're unsure of the dress code—say, for a night at the theater or a dinner with your friend's friends. Opt for a synthetic blend so you can roll it up to practically nothing in your bag and pull it out with minimal creases.
- 2. Printed scarf.** Make sure the color palette goes with everything you pack and you'll always have a cozy, stylish accessory for museum visits and overly air-conditioned airplanes.
- 3. Statement earrings.** A bold pair can single-handedly transform a strolling-on-the-boardwalk sundress into a dancing-the-night-away getup.
- 4. Ankle-length pants.** Even with a simple top, these are sharp enough for a business meeting and Hepburn enough for a shopping trip. Look for a style in a dark shade (for optimal versatility) with stretch (to resist wrinkles).
- 5. Metallic shoes.** Walkable wedges, flats, or sandals in silver or gold give you the flexibility to go straight from a day of sightseeing to a swanky restaurant.



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10 REAL SIMPLE RULES FOR...

Flattering Your Figure



ANOTHER SIGN A BRA DOESN'T FIT PROPERLY? THE BAND SITS HIGHER IN THE BACK THAN IN THE FRONT.

1

Check that your **bra** is doing its job of lifting you up where you belong: Nipples should be exactly between your shoulders and elbows.

2

Keep **prints** in scale to your frame. The larger the person, the larger the pattern should be. The reverse is also true.

3

If you want to minimize a fuller bum, choose **jean pockets** that are large, straight, and spaced somewhat close together.

4

Look taller and trimmer by dressing **monochromatically** head to toe. (Yup, it works even with white.)

5

Go for a **hemline** that hits right above or right below the kneecap to make legs look their absolute best.

6

Embrace **diagonals**. Think wrap dresses, chevron prints, and asymmetrical hemlines. Wherever that downward-sloping angle lies will magically appear slimmer.

7

Flaunt your **collarbone** with an open neckline. Unlike cleavage, the clavicle is subtly sensual and looks elegant on almost every woman.

8

Follow this **color** guideline to play up (or downplay) your figure: Wear lights and brights in the areas that you want to highlight; darks on the parts that you want to recede.

9

Use **tailored silhouettes** in structured fabrics—say, a wool blazer or a cotton A-line—as body armor to hide jiggly bits.

10

To create the illusion of never-ending legs, slip on **heels** that match your skin tone.



GIVE 'EM THE BOLD SHOULDER AND YOUR WAIST AND HIPS WILL SEEM NARROW IN COMPARISON.



FOR KILLER LEGS, CHOOSE SHOES THAT HAVE POINTY OR ALMOND-SHAPED TOES.



FLATTERY TIPS FOR FULLER FIGURES
Learn the rules for plus-size dressing at realsimple.com/plusdressing.

TOP LEFT AND BOTTOM LEFT: PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENS MORTENSEN; TOP RIGHT: NATIONAL ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES. CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM RIGHT: STEVE MADDEN PUMPS, \$100, STEVEMADDEN.COM. MAX MARA CAMEL BLAZER, \$1,290, 617-267-9775. ZARA STRIPED DRESS, \$80, ZARA.COM.

BRIGHT IDEAS

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EVENTS

FINDS

GIVEAWAYS



RS4GOOD GIVES BACK

In celebration of 15 years of "life made easier," RS continues its core mission by partnering with a few iconic charities that are especially close to our hearts. Help us celebrate by supporting these organizations with us!

RS4GOOD, FOR YOU!

Be one of the first to post, volunteer, or donate \$25 or more to a RS4GOOD partner and we will send you a limited-edition RS4GOOD T-shirt. Log onto **RSLifestyle/RS4GOOD** for more information and to donate.

ASPCA

Post a pic of the rescued animal in your life to inspire others to adopt a pet in need of a loving home and family. Real Simple will reward your efforts with one of our specialized prize packs!

GOD'S LOVE WE DELIVER

To raise awareness and funding for this very important organization that delivers nutritious meals to the seriously ill, Real Simple will host a benefit in NYC.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Real Simple believes in making life easier and more beautiful for everyone, which is why we will be collaborating on a few special projects to help those in need.

YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP NETWORK

To honor the empowering mission of YWLN, Real Simple will be hosting a career and mentoring day at our offices. We will also create a grant for the Class of 2015 and celebrate this cause at our fall Women & Success event.

SPONSOR:



CHARITY PARTNERS:



*Limited-time offer. Only the first 300 qualified submissions will receive the RS4GOOD T-shirt (ARV: \$10). Limit one RS4GOOD T-shirt per household. Donation must be made between 3/4/15 and 6/30/15. Proof of donation must be in the form of a photo of a donation receipt to one (1) of the four charities: Habitat for Humanity, God's Love We Deliver, ASPCA, or YWLN. Email RS4GOOD@realsimple.com with proof of a \$25 donation receipt to one (1) of the four charities listed above, along with your contact information. Must be received by 6/30/15. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery after 6/30/15, the end date of the promotion. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, late, or misdirected submissions. Any attempt at fraud may lead to disqualification and further legal action. Void where prohibited by law. All referenced trademarks are the properties of their respective owners.

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WINNERS NEVER QUIT

The RS fashion hall of fame

BEST BOOTS

Ugg

Protest all you want, but this slouchy staple, popularized in the early 2000s, still wins the top prize for warmth and comfort.

SHOWN: Ugg boots, \$155, uggaustralia.com.

MOST WANTED FLATS

Tory Burch

One of the first designers to bridge the gap between well designed and well priced, Tory Burch introduced her Reva flats in 2006, and they continue to sell every season.

SHOWN: Tory Burch Reva flats, \$250, toryburch.com.

BEST PREMIUM JEANS

7 For All Mankind

When the company launched in 2000, it brought jeans with enhanced fit and high-quality fabrication to the forefront of fashion, prompting scores of other denim companies to do the same (and prompting customers to fork over prices in the hundreds).

SHOWN: 7 For All Mankind The Skinny jeans, \$178, saksfifthavenue.com.

BEST EYEWEAR

Warby Parker

Style and smarts. With a user-friendly shopping experience, classic-chic designs, and refreshingly low prices (by cutting out the middleman), Warby Parker, founded in 2010, has become a go-to for glasses and shades.

SHOWN: Warby Parker Piper sunglasses, \$95, warbyparker.com.



BEST BATHING SUITS

Shoshanna swimwear

Launched in 2001, this über-flattering line was one of the first to size bikini tops like bras. (Can you believe it took that long?)

SHOWN: Shoshanna bikini top, \$140; and bottom, \$88; bloomingdales.com.

BEST WINTER INNOVATION

Touch-screen gloves

The debut of the iPhone in 2007 solved a lot of problems, but it also created one: You couldn't text with gloves on. Companies like Echo came to the rescue with touch screen-friendly options. Echo's come in 13 colors!

SHOWN: Echo gloves, \$38, echodesign.com.

BEST SUMMER INNOVATION

Rash guard with built-in SPF

Innovative fabric technology and one of the broadest selections of garments (including clothing, swimwear, and hats) mean Coolibar leads the charge in built-in sun protection of at least UPF 50. In sizes for the entire family.

SHOWN: Coolibar rash guard, \$60, coolibar.com.

THE GUIDE
fashion

STYLING BY YOLANDE GAGNIER

Photographs by Jens Mortensen

WINNERS NEVER QUIT

MOST CHARITABLE

Tom's

In 2006 Tom's began with the intention of donating a pair of shoes to someone in need for each pair bought. To date, it has donated more than 35 million pairs—and created a bona fide footwear trend in the process.

SHOWN: Tom's slip-ons, \$48, toms.com.

MOST LIFE-CHANGING

Spanx shapewear

Sara Blakely cut the bottoms off her control-top panty hose in 2000, and the rest was history. Fifteen years and loads of imitations later, we still look to her designs for the ultimate in figure flattery.

SHOWN: Spanx Higher Power Short, \$38, nordstrom.com.

FASTEST FASHION LINE

Zara

This retail giant consistently turns out some of the best “fast fashion.” (That's industry-speak for quick, inexpensive versions of the latest runway trends.) The launch of its website in 2011 made catwalk-worthy style even more accessible.

SHOWN: Necklace, \$40; top, \$70; pants, \$70; purse, \$90; heels, \$80: zara.com.

THE GUIDE
fashion



MOST WEARABLE LINGERIE

Hanky Panky thongs

The signature style—sexy, lacy, and (trust us) comfortable—comes in nearly every color imaginable, and the sizing is foolproof: one super-stretchy pick that fits nearly everyone.

SHOWN: Hanky Panky low-rise thong, \$20, hankypanky.com.

TIP

Show your shape—without committing a faux pas. Check out spanx.com for apparel—jeans, leggings, workout wear—all with the signature Spanx shaping technology.



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†Data on file

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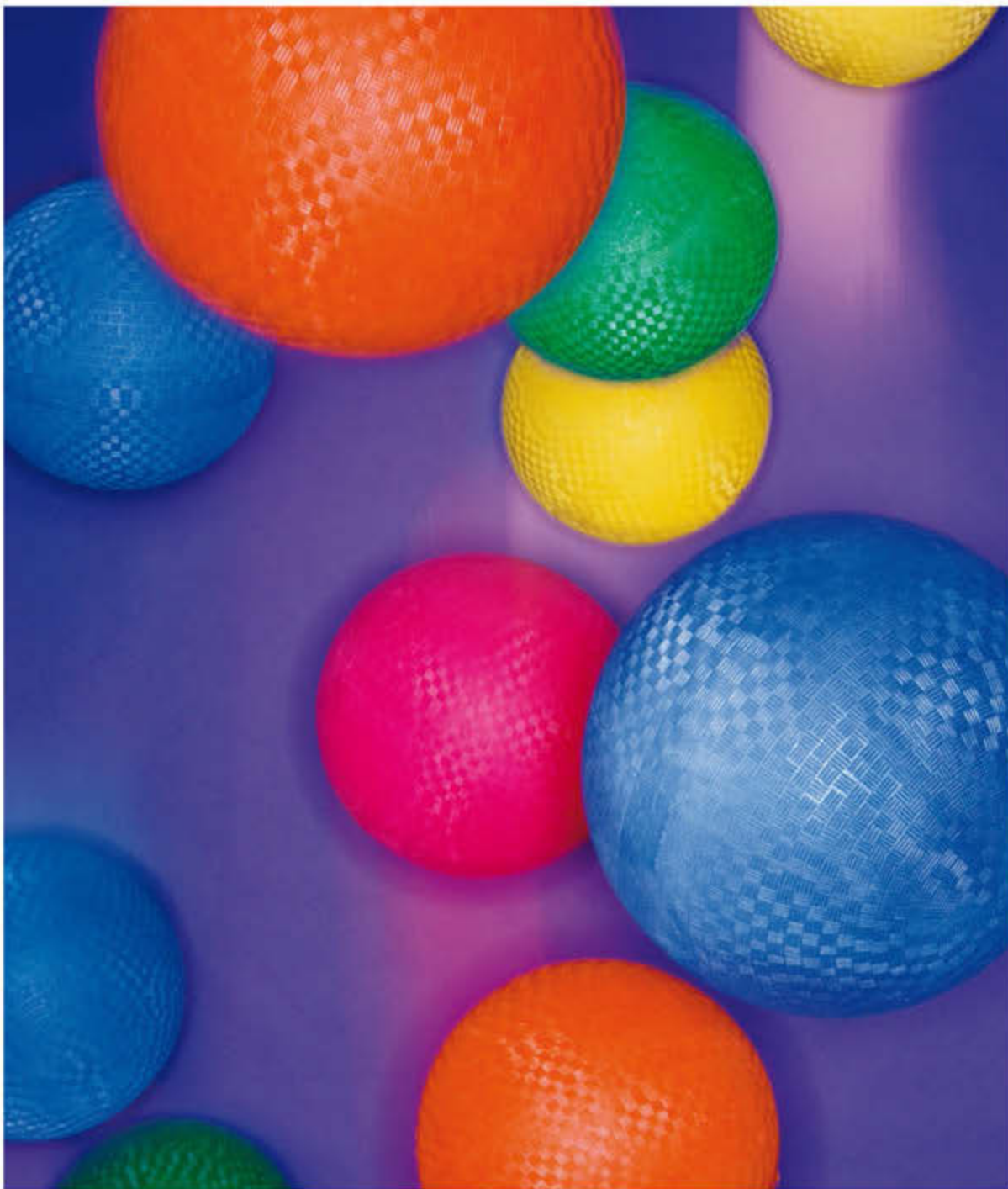
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Health + Family

15 YEARS OF MAKING LIFE EASIER: (SOME OF) OUR ALL-TIME BEST
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PROP STYLING BY NOEMI BONAZZI

Photograph by Stephen Lewis

TURKEY, SMASHED PEAS, AND PESTO SANDWICH

From the
Kitchen of Real Simple®

Yield: Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

1/4 small red onion, sliced
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
2 tablespoons butter
10 ounces frozen peas
kosher salt and black pepper
1/4 cup pesto
8 ounces **Hillshire Farm® Naturals™
Slow Roasted Turkey Breast**
8 slices white country bread, toasted

PREPARATION

1. Toss the onion and vinegar in a small bowl. Let sit until the onion is tender and bright pink, 3 to 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, heat the butter in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the peas and 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper and cook until heated through, 5 to 7 minutes. Mash until the peas hold together.
3. Divide the peas, onion, pesto, and turkey among the bread.



Naturally DELICIOUS!



You often go to great lengths to provide your family with wholesome, all-natural meals, but find that a lack of delicious options is impossible to overcome. Luckily, there are **Hillshire Farm Naturals** lunchmeats. With all-natural, mouth-watering flavors, now you can make really delicious sandwiches that you can feel really good serving your family. Plus the great taste is **guaranteed or your money back**.

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BIG TASTE COMES NATURAL TO US

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NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Purchasing does not improve your chances of winning. The Naturally Delicious Sweepstakes is open to residents of the 50 United States and D.C., age 18 or older. Void outside United States, Puerto Rico and wherever else prohibited by law. Sweepstakes begins at 12:01AM ET on 2/25/15 and ends at 11:59PM ET on 4/30/15. For entry details and Official Rules, see www.NaturallyDeliciousSweeps.com. Sponsor: TI Media Solutions Inc., 1271 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020.



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oh. my. fudge.



Soft, chewy cookie on the outside.
Crazy, delicious fudge on the inside. Booyah.



The only parenting advice you really need

Over 15 years, we've talked to hundreds of experts. It pretty much boils down to this.

Illustrations by Luke Pearson

1

Let your kids fail.

To learn self-sufficiency, kids need to occasionally dust themselves off (literally and figuratively) without your help. “Most parents know what their children are capable of but step in to make things easier for them,” says Sheri Noga, the author of *Have the Guts to Do It Right: Raising Grateful and Responsible Children in an Era of Indulgence*. Remember: Long-term benefits—a teenager who knows how to do her own laundry, for example—trump momentary discomfort. Before you rush in to help with any physical task, ask yourself: “Is my child in real danger?” Then—and this applies to other challenges, like the social-studies poster due tomorrow—think about whether your child has the necessary skills (dexterity and balance) or simply adequate sleep and a snack. Yes? Time to back off and see what happens.

2

Abide by the three rules of homework.

Number one: “Eat the frog,” says Ted Theodorou, a middle-school social-studies teacher in Fairfax County, Virginia. That’s shorthand for “Do the hardest thing first.” Rule number two: Put away the phone. Homework time can’t be totally tech-free (computers, alas, are often a necessary evil), but it can at least be free of text messages. Rule number three: As soon as assignments are finished, load up the backpack for tomorrow and place it by the door. This is a clear three-step process that kids can internalize, so there’s less nagging from you. (Yes!)



3

Memorize the acronym H.A.L.T.

Tantrums often happen because the thrower is Hungry, Agitated, Lonely, or Tired.

4

Plan not-so-random acts of kindness.

Kids need to know that helping others is an everyday practice, not a visit-a-soup-kitchen-at-the-holidays grand gesture. Challenge yours to complete small tasks every week, like throwing away another kid’s trash at lunch or raking a neighbor’s lawn. Training your children to focus on others helps curb entitle-

ment. “Gratitude becomes woven into who they are,” says Jeffrey J. Froh, a coauthor of *Making Grateful Kids*.

5

Be strict about bedtime.

A study published in 2013 in the journal *Pediatrics* found that seven-year-olds who had irregular bedtimes had more behavioral problems than did those with consistent bedtimes. And the longer the lack of a strict bedtime went on, the worse the problems became. If you work outside the home, it’s tempting to keep kids up to have more time with them. But as much as possible, stay the course—even if that means you sometimes miss lights out. “We all make sacrifices,” says Heather



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Taylor, Ph.D., a psychologist at the Morrissey-Compton Educational Center, in Redwood City, California. “Call or video-chat to say good night. Just be part of the routine.”

6

Let them read what they want.

Kids who read for pleasure excel academically—not only in language arts but, as recent research from the Institute of Education, in London, found, in math as well. So while you *wish* he would pick up Dickens, don’t make him feel bad about a graphic novel. “A ‘junky’ series can be good if it gets kids hooked on the habit of reading,” says Mary Leon-

hardt, a former high school English teacher and the author of *Parents Who Love Reading, Kids Who Don’t*.

7

Don’t pay your kids to clean their rooms.

“If you give them a buck to make their beds, then when you ask them to help you carry in the groceries, they’ll say, ‘How much? Why would I do that for free when you pay me to make my bed?’” says author and parenting expert Alyson Schafer. You can give your child an allowance as an introduction to money management and possibly for overall good behavior. But don’t tie it dollar-for-dollar to everyday chores.

8

Model brave behavior.

Want confident kids? They will be less likely to be easily flustered if they see you taking healthy risks. “A lot of adults won’t go to a movie solo because they would be embarrassed to be seen sitting alone. So do it, then talk to your kids about it,” says David Allyn, the author of *I Can’t Believe I Just Did That*. Similarly, if your kids see you laugh when you realize that your shirt has been misbuttoned all morning, maybe they’ll giggle, instead of feeling embarrassed, when it happens to them.

9

Repeat: *I am not a short-order cook.*

“It’s a child’s job to learn to eat what the parents eat,” says Ellyn Satter, a registered dietitian and the author of *Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family*. Instead of the all-or-nothing scenario, offer a variety of foods at mealtime: the main course, plus rice or pasta, a fruit or vegetable, and milk. This way, your child can eat just the pasta and the peas and get protein from the milk. “What a child eats over the course of a day or a week is more important than a balanced meal at one sitting,” says Stephen Daniels, the chairman of the department of pediatrics at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, in Aurora.

10

Pay attention at age 14.

That’s when most kids start to resist peer influence and flex the think-for-myself muscle, rather than simply following the leader, according to a study published in *Developmental Psychology*. Want to help strengthen that muscle at any age? Put screens aside and circle the

kindle THE LOVE OF READING



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Join **REAL SIMPLE** for our 2nd annual **Beauty & Balance** event, a pop-up experience highlighting the best beauty and wellness products, services, and techniques. Come meet editors, stylists, and nutrition and fitness pros, and treat yourself to complimentary workshops, samples, and beauty treatments.

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wagons every night. Ask, "What's new with your friends?" This will (here's hoping, if he talks) give you a chance to decode what's happening behind the scenes and offer support.

11

Tackle fears with common sense.

If she's scared of dogs, don't hustle her across the street when one is coming. Demystify the fear. ("Oh, a puppy! Let's ask the owner if we can feel how soft his fur is.") In tense moments—shots come to mind—be sympathetic but not too emotional, says Atlanta-area pediatrician Roy Benaroch. Say, "It will be

OK. It will be over in a few minutes," not, "I know—it hurts! It hurts!"

12

To get little kids to be quiet, lower your voice instead of raising it.

This forces kids to focus. Got a whole pack to corral? Whisper, "If you want to hear what we're doing next, hop on one foot." Goofy jumping is bound to be contagious.

13

Put on your own oxygen mask first.

In other words, take care of yourself or you can't be a fully engaged parent. Parents who deprive themselves

of rest, food, and fun for the sake of their kids do no one a favor. "People feel guilty when they work a lot, so they want to give all their free time to their kids," says Fred Stocker, a child psychiatrist at the University of Louisville School of Medicine, in Kentucky. "But you risk getting squeezed dry and emotionally exhausted." A spa weekend may not be realistic, but it's OK to take 15 minutes for a bath after you walk in the door. (A tall request for a kid, yes, but a happier Uno player goes a long way.) Running ragged between activities? Ask your child to prioritize, says Taylor. She may be dying for you to chaperone a field trip but ambivalent about your missing a swim meet—the ideal amount of time for a pedicure.

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HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS

Essential questions for aging parents

Think the birds and bees is the most awkward chat you'll ever have with Mom and Dad? Think again. Adulthood brings other uncomfortable conversations: wills, long-term care, and end-of-life issues. Here's how to handle these delicate subjects with care.



WHILE
YOU'RE AT
IT, ASK...



ON THEIR FINANCES...

THE BIG QUESTION

Do you have a will?

A will determines the future of not only money and property but also pets and even token mementos. When someone dies without a will, her estate is divided in probate court, where a judge decides who gets the assets. "This can cost thousands of dollars and take months," says Christina Leshner, a Houston-based elder-law attorney. "Even if the deceased told a loved one her wishes before she died, a verbal statement won't hold up in court. The judge will base his ruling on laws and legal precedents of the state."

HOW TO BRING IT UP

"I don't want to upset you, but if something happened to you, I would want to know that your wishes were being honored. Do you have a will?"

Have you consulted a reliable financial planner who can help anticipate your needs as you age?

Will you give me or another trusted person power of attorney over your financial affairs in case there's a time you can't handle them yourself?

Do you have an authorized user on your bank and investment accounts?

Do you need help handling some of your financial responsibilities, like double-checking your credit-card statements and reviewing your bills?

Are you willing to have a joint checking account with me so I can help you pay bills if necessary?

ON THEIR LIVING SITUATION...

THE BIG QUESTION

Have you thought about long-term-care insurance?

Most long-term assisted-living or nursing-home expenses are not covered by Medicare, says Joy Loverde, the author of *The Complete Eldercare Planner*. And long-term care, which includes anything from extended home assistance to a nursing home, is very costly.

HOW TO BRING IT UP

"I read about how much assisted living can cost, and I was stunned. I would want you to have the best care if it ever came to that. Have you looked into insurance?"



WHILE
YOU'RE AT
IT, ASK...



Do you want to live in your house for as long as possible? Are there things we need to do to your house so it's safe and comfortable for you as you age? Can we make some of those changes now?

Are you willing to move into a smaller place that's easier to manage, like a condo? When?

Have either of you thought about whether you would want to stay in the house if you were alone?

Would you be willing to hire someone to help you at home if you can't do it on your own anymore?

Would you consider moving in with me or one of my siblings if we all agree that you need help with your personal care or aren't safe at home alone anymore? How do you feel about moving into an assisted-living facility?

Can I help you scout out quality assisted-living facilities and nursing homes now, so we know what's available and what you would prefer in case you need one in the future?

Illustrations by
Eight Hour Day

THE GUIDE
family



meet the A-LIST

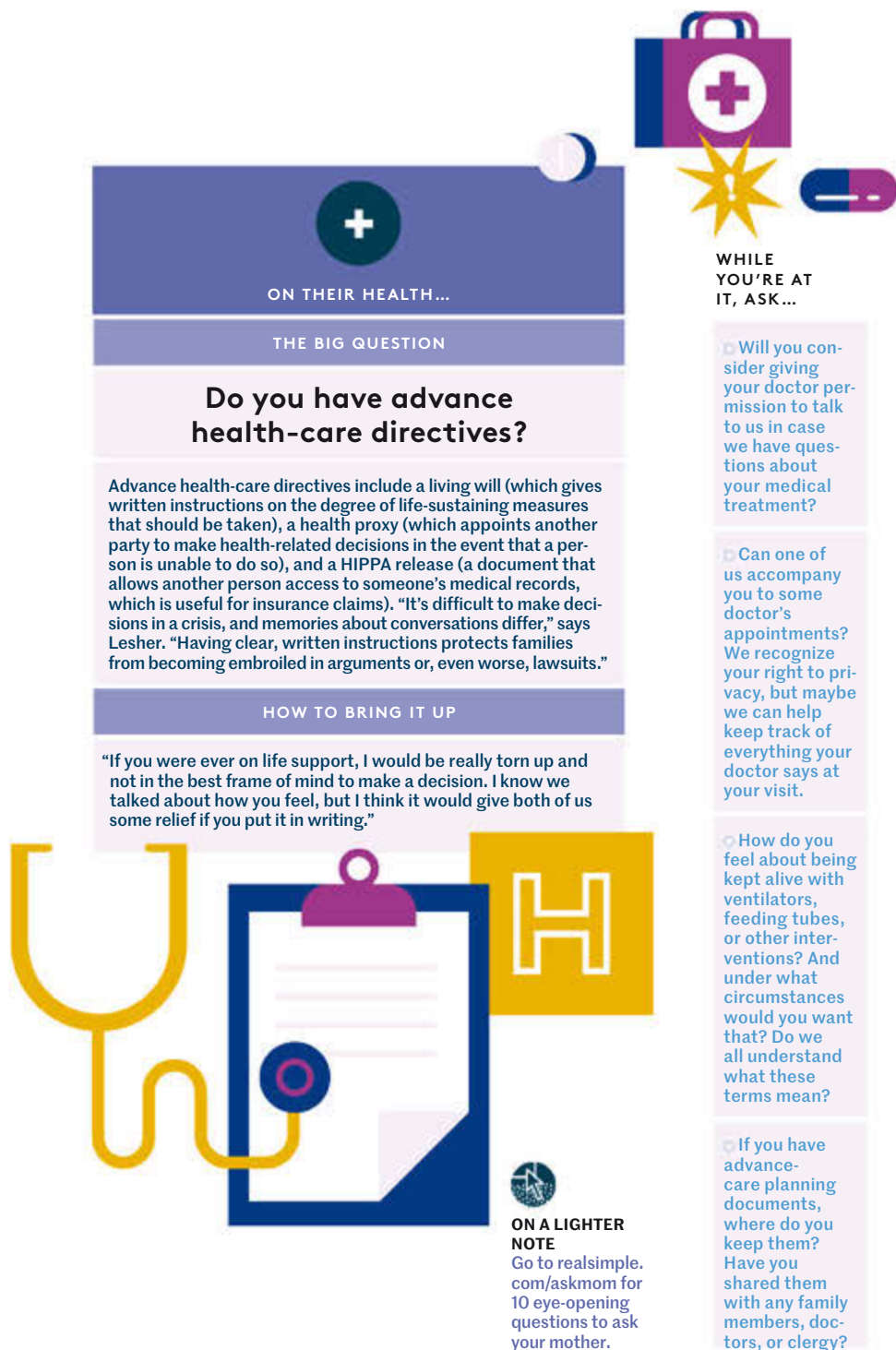
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HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS

Essential questions for aging parents (cont.)



The infographic is titled "HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS" and "Essential questions for aging parents (cont.)". It features a central graphic with a purple medical bag, a yellow starburst, and a purple pill. The main question is "Do you have advance health-care directives?". Below this, a paragraph explains that advance health-care directives include a living will and a HIPPA release. To the right, three questions are listed under the heading "WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, ASK...". At the bottom, a "ON A LIGHTER NOTE" section provides a link to a website for more questions.

ON THEIR HEALTH...

THE BIG QUESTION

Do you have advance health-care directives?

Advance health-care directives include a living will (which gives written instructions on the degree of life-sustaining measures that should be taken), a health proxy (which appoints another party to make health-related decisions in the event that a person is unable to do so), and a HIPPA release (a document that allows another person access to someone's medical records, which is useful for insurance claims). "It's difficult to make decisions in a crisis, and memories about conversations differ," says Leshner. "Having clear, written instructions protects families from becoming embroiled in arguments or, even worse, lawsuits."

HOW TO BRING IT UP

"If you were ever on life support, I would be really torn up and not in the best frame of mind to make a decision. I know we talked about how you feel, but I think it would give both of us some relief if you put it in writing."

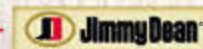
WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, ASK...

- Will you consider giving your doctor permission to talk to us in case we have questions about your medical treatment?
- Can one of us accompany you to some doctor's appointments? We recognize your right to privacy, but maybe we can help keep track of everything your doctor says at your visit.
- How do you feel about being kept alive with ventilators, feeding tubes, or other interventions? And under what circumstances would you want that? Do we all understand what these terms mean?
- If you have advance-care planning documents, where do you keep them? Have you shared them with any family members, doctors, or clergy?

ON A LIGHTER NOTE
Go to realsimple.com/askmom for 10 eye-opening questions to ask your mother.

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SAUSAGE BRUNCH CASSEROLE

INGREDIENTS

1 pkg. Jimmy Dean® Regular Flavor Pork Sausage Roll

- 6 eggs
- 2 cups milk
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 pkgs. (5 ounces each) seasoned croutons (about 6 cups)
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded sharp cheddar cheese, divided

DIRECTIONS

- PREHEAT** oven to 350 F. Cook sausage in large skillet over MEDIUM-HIGH heat 8-10 minutes or until thoroughly cooked, stirring frequently; drain.
- BEAT** eggs, milk and mustard in large bowl with a wire whisk until well blended. Add bread cubes; stir gently until evenly coated. Stir in sausage and 1½ cups cheese.
- POUR** into lightly greased 13x9-inch baking dish; sprinkle with remaining cheese.
- BAKE** 40-45 minutes or until knife inserted in center comes out clean. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting into 12 squares to serve.

Go to myrecipes.com/eastersides for additional recipes to make your Easter meal cooked to perfection.

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SPRING AHEAD

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO MAKE THIS THE BEST SPRING YET

Springtime is full of excitement, potential, and fun. Here are some great ideas to help you enjoy spring to the fullest.



1

RIDE A BIKE

Take the family on a day-long bike ride to explore new parks, neighborhoods, and wildlife. **Don't forget your helmet!**

2

WALK THE DOG

Get your four-legged friends (as well as yourself) some fresh air after a long winter with a brisk hike to the dog park.



Use as directed.
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3

TIME FOR SPRING CLEANING

It isn't a time-honored tradition for nothing; refreshing your life and living space sets the stage for a clutter-free and active season.

4

PLANT VEGETABLES

Choose your kids' favorite veggies for home-grown salads and pasta dishes in the upcoming warm months.



5

INDULGE IN CHILDHOOD NOSTALGIA

Lure your family away from indoor technology with fun activities like flying a kite, blowing bubbles, or drawing with sidewalk chalk.



6

DECORATE YOUR HOME WITH FLOWERY PRINTS

Flowery wallpaper, blankets, pillows, and towels can bring a burst of color to your home without setting off your allergies.

7

EAT OUTSIDE

Enjoy the first warm breezes of spring at an outdoor café. Sip a cappuccino and read up on the coming season's fashion trends.

8

PICK UP CLARITIN AT TARGET

Along with your everyday items needed for the week, make sure to include Claritin® tablets and Children's Claritin chewables for the relief of sneezing, runny nose, and itchy, watery eyes caused by spring allergies.



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No worries!
Fear you're eating too many carbs? Forgetting too much? Here, top experts reveal eight common health concerns that you can stop losing sleep over.

Written by Kimberly Goad
Illustrations by Dan Page



YOU MAKE GOOD USE of your gym membership, your fridge is stocked with kale and blueberries, and you've never missed a checkup. Even so, you nurse chronic, low-grade worries about the latest supposedly healthy thing ("Should I adopt it?") and the endless "bad" things du jour. "We've all lost sight of what it means to be healthy," says Alice Domar, Ph.D., the executive director of the Domar Center for Mind/Body Health, in Boston, and a coauthor of *Live a Little! Breaking the Rules Won't Break Your Health*. "Being healthy means being smart about balancing the things you should do with the things you like to do." To that end, *Real Simple* consulted doctors, research scientists, nutritionists, physical trainers, and other health experts to set the record straight about the most common concerns among the worried well. Here's what you need to know.

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YOUR DIET

DON'T WORRY ABOUT...

Gluten

There's no research showing that the protein found in grains like wheat, barley, and rye will give you brain fog, zap your energy, or keep you from losing weight. In fact, overconsumption of gluten-free products may actually be bad for you, according to Alessio Fasano, M.D., the director of the Center for Celiac Research at Massachusetts General Hospital, in Boston. Many aren't fortified with iron or other vitamins and minerals, so you may be missing out on essential nutrients. And since they're often loaded with fat and sugar to improve flavor, they can have twice the calories of their gluten-containing equivalents.

UNLESS... You're among the 1 percent of people in the United

States with celiac disease—meaning you can't digest gluten and run the risk of seriously damaging your intestines if you try to eat the stuff. Or you're among the 6 percent who suffer from non-celiac gluten sensitivity. Cutting out gluten is the only treatment for now, though a pill currently in development shows promise, according to recent research.

Carbs

A calorie is a calorie, whether it comes from protein, fat, or carbohydrates, according to several major studies. "For health, it matters a lot where calories come from, but when it comes to weight, the body doesn't care," says Marion Nestle, Ph.D., the Paulette Goddard professor of nutrition, food studies, and public health at New York University and a coauthor of *Why*

Calories Count: From Science to Politics. "If you take in more calories than you expend in metabolism and physical activity, you gain weight. Our bodies do not violate the laws of thermodynamics."

UNLESS... The carbs that you're always filling up on are refined (the kind in white rice and bread), and they can cause your blood sugar to spike, making you hungrier and slowing your metabolism, according to a study published in *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

YOUR TEST RESULTS

DON'T WORRY ABOUT...

A single high blood-pressure reading

Your blood pressure can change from minute to minute and is affected by everything from how much sleep you got to how stressful your morning was. (See "Your Essential Health Test Guide," page 151.) That's why your doctor may do subsequent readings to get an accurate number.

UNLESS... You have diabetes, heart disease, or kidney problems; heart disease runs in your family; or you're over 50. Any of these factors raise your risk of high blood pressure, so if you fall into these categories, your doctor will want to monitor your blood pressure more frequently and start blood-pressure medications if it remains high. Many people with slightly elevated blood pressure can keep their blood pressure normal with a healthy diet and regular exercise.

Getting mammograms yearly

If you're under age 50, some research shows that the benefits of annual mammography are small; the test causes many false alarms and can lead to a diagnosis of cancer that would never have become a problem during your lifetime. You and your doctor may decide that it's enough to get a mammogram every two years between the ages of 40 and 49.

UNLESS... You have a mother, a daughter, or a sister who has had breast cancer; you've inherited a genetic disease, like Li-Fraumeni or Cowden syndrome; or you have a relative who carries a BRCA mutation. If any of these apply, you should start getting mammograms at age 30, or 10 years before the age of your youngest family member's breast cancer diagnosis if it was earlier than 40, says Nancy Keating, M.D., a professor of health-care policy at Harvard Medical School.

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YOUR SYMPTOMS

DON'T WORRY ABOUT...

Occasional forgetfulness

It's normal for people to become at least slightly forgetful as they get older. "In women, menopause can wreak havoc on memory," says Peter Nelson, M.D., Ph.D., an Alzheimer's disease specialist at the Sanders-Brown Center on Aging at the University of Kentucky, in Lexington. Poor sleep, mood changes, and hot flashes associated with plummeting estrogen may do a number on short-term memory, research shows.

UNLESS... Your forgetfulness begins to affect your job or your ability to live independently, particularly if Alzheimer's runs in your family. If the latter is true, your risk of getting the disease is three to four times greater than average, says Nelson. "Increasing social stimulation and treating depression or hormonal changes can help a person go from getting worse to stabilizing," he says.

Chest pain

Often it's acid reflux, experts say. "Only about 5 to 10 percent of patients who visit emergency rooms with chest pain end up being diagnosed with a heart attack," says Richard Krasuski, M.D., the director of Adult Congenital Heart Services at the Cleveland Clinic. (Although heart attacks can manifest in other ways than chest pain in women, "chest pain" is still the most common symptom cited by both men and women in ERs.)

UNLESS... One or both of your parents had heart trouble, or you're a man over 50 or a woman over 60—all risk factors. Other clues that the pain is serious: "You're sweating, having trouble breathing, or the pain moves into your neck or jaw or down the left arm," says Krasuski.

THE EXERCISES YOU DO

DON'T WORRY THAT...

Running will ruin your knees

The opposite may be true, according to a study presented at the 2014 meeting of the American College of Rheumatology. Runners in the study experienced knee pain less often than did non-runners, and fewer had evidence of knee osteoarthritis. "Running may even help protect a person from developing arthritis," says Grace Hsiao-Wei Lo, M.D., the study's lead author.

UNLESS... You're overweight or overdoing it. "When you run, your knees absorb three times your body weight with each step," says exercise physiologist Wayne Westcott, Ph.D., the head of the exercise science department at Quincy College, in Massachusetts. The toll on your knees is greater if you run on a hard surface, like concrete, or if you log more than 30 miles a week. "Take that down to 10 to 20 miles a week, and try other types of cardio, like cycling, swimming or rowing," says Westcott.

You're not sweaty after a workout

Sweating is simply the process your body uses to maintain its normal temperature—not the gauge of a "good" workout, says Jessica Matthews, a senior health and fitness expert for the American Council on Exercise. "Some people perspire heavily even during very light physical activity, and some barely sweat during intense exercise," she says. "Neither is necessarily cause for alarm."

UNLESS... You don't sweat at all. If that's the case, you may have a condition called anhidrosis. The obvious tip-off is a lack of perspiration, but other symptoms include dizziness, muscle cramps, and nausea. If you're hydrated before, during, and after exercise and you still experience any of these effects during a workout, see your doctor, says Matthews.

It's the little things

Go ahead and erase the following from your worry list. Research has shown that they're not worth fretting over.

FULL-FAT DAIRY

Consuming whole milk, cream, cheese, and butter has been linked to a lower risk of type 2 diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular disease, according to a growing number of studies. All these foods are caloric, though, so watch your portions.

PUBLIC RESTROOMS

They're no worse than any other public place, according to a study published in a 2015 issue of *Applied and Environmental Microbiology*. Less than 15 percent of the germs in restrooms were from feces, leading researchers to conclude that those germs may die off quickly.

COFFEE

A morning cup of joe can help reduce your risk of type 2 diabetes by up to 7 percent, and a four-cup-a-day habit has been linked to a 20 percent lower risk of melanoma.

RAW VS. COOKED

Boiled or steamed vegetables—like broccoli, carrots, and zucchini—have more of some antioxidants, such as carotenoids and ferulic acid, than raw ones do, according to a 2008 report in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*.

GETTING AN EPIDURAL DURING EARLY LABOR

Early, late—there's no difference in terms of birth outcome, according to a review of nine studies involving more than 15,750 first-time mothers published by the Cochrane Library.

MONOSODIUM GLUTAMATE

Despite the belief that MSG causes headaches and other symptoms of so-called Chinese restaurant syndrome, there is no solid research to support this claim, concluded a study in the journal *Appetite*.

► MEET THE
BLOGGER:
**POLLY
BLITZER**



Beauty expert Polly Blitzer, founder of the popular site **beautyblitz.com**, started her editing career at *Marie Claire* and *InStyle*. She has spent over 15 years testing countless products with a cynic's eye to challenge claims and to search for better solutions. Polly's sharp insights and clever commentary draw hundreds of thousands of fans across social platforms. She's often quoted in *The New York Times*, *New York Daily News*, and *New York Post*, and appears on TV shows like *E! News* and *Today*. She buzzes through the day guzzling iced coffee and loves to travel, but her favorite place to be is at home with her identical twins, Sam and Miles, husband Mark, and their puppy, Trixie.

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HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS

Health-test calendar

A few quick exams can help detect heart disease, cancer, and other serious issues while they're still treatable. But when should you have them, and how often? Here, a head-to-toe look at the 12 most important regular checkups.



FASTING-BLOOD-GLUCOSE TEST

AGE YOU NEED IT	45 and up
FREQUENCY	Every 3 years

IT CAN TELL YOU...

If you have or are at risk for type 2 diabetes. A glucose rating—or the amount of glucose in your blood—of 126 or above on two separate tests indicates you have diabetes. Blood glucose between 100 and 125 signals prediabetes, which can typically be addressed with lifestyle changes, like a healthy diet and exercise.

GOOD TO KNOW

For the greatest accuracy, try to schedule your appointment first thing in the morning, says Mary Ann Bauman, M.D., the medical director for women's health at Integris Health, in Oklahoma City, and a spokesperson for the American Heart Association.



BLOOD-PRESSURE SCREENING

AGE YOU NEED IT	18 and up
FREQUENCY	Every 2 years

IT CAN TELL YOU...

If you're at risk for hypertension, stroke, heart disease, or kidney disease. The screening measures your systolic (when the heart is contracting) and diastolic (when the heart is resting) blood pressure. If your blood pressure is high, to bring it down, you may need to lower your salt intake, increase your exercise, and eat healthier. (You know the drill: less fat, less meat, more fruits and vegetables.)

GOOD TO KNOW

"There's a lot of variation in blood pressure, and sometimes it's elevated in the clinic but normal at home," says Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo, M.D., a spokesperson for the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. Your doctor may want to retest you or ask you to wear a device that tests your blood pressure at home.



BONE-DENSITY TEST

AGE YOU NEED IT	65 and up
FREQUENCY	After your first test, probably every 15 years if bone density is normal at the first test, and as often as every one to two years if it is low, says the National Osteoporosis Foundation.

IT CAN TELL YOU...

If you have or are at risk for osteoporosis, a disease that weakens bones, often leading to fractures. The test compares your bone density with that of a healthy 30-year-old.

GOOD TO KNOW

See if you can schedule your bone-density scan at the same time you do your mammogram. A lot of facilities offer both tests, and making one trip will save you time.



CHOLESTEROL SCREENING (FASTING-LIPOPROTEIN PROFILE)

AGE YOU NEED IT	20 and up
FREQUENCY	Every 4 to 6 years

IT CAN TELL YOU...

If you're at risk for heart disease or stroke, both of which can be caused in part by high LDL ("bad") cholesterol and triglycerides. This blood test measures your total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, HDL ("good") cholesterol, and triglycerides.

GOOD TO KNOW

Aside from water and medications, don't eat or drink anything for 12 to 14 hours before the test. Anything you consume could throw off your LDL cholesterol and triglyceride results, rendering them unusable. You may also want to avoid alcohol for 24 hours or so before the screening.

THE GUIDE
health

Written by Mary Squillace Illustrations by Eight Hour Day Additional reporting by Molly M. Ginty

ICONS BY KATIE FIELD

HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS

Health-test calendar (cont.)



COMPREHENSIVE EYE EXAM

AGE YOU NEED IT	3 to 5
FREQUENCY	After pediatric testing, the American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends adult testing at least once a decade before age 40 and every two years between 40 and 65.
IT CAN TELL YOU...	
How well you're seeing and if you have macular degeneration, cataracts, glaucoma, or even brain tumors.	
GOOD TO KNOW	
To examine the backs of your eyes, the doctor may dilate your pupils, which can increase your sensitivity to light and make reading difficult afterward. Schedule your appointment at the end of the day if you're concerned about being able to go back to work, and take public transportation if you're uncomfortable getting behind the wheel.	

COLONOSCOPY

AGE YOU NEED IT	Age 50 to 75, but people with a family history of colon cancer should start screenings at 40.
FREQUENCY	Every 10 years
IT CAN TELL YOU...	
If you have colon cancer or precancerous areas in your colon.	
GOOD TO KNOW	
Because you'll have to drink a liquid laxative before the procedure, fill your plate with low-fiber, easy-to-digest foods, like white bread, tender meat, and cooked fruits and vegetables without seeds or skin in the four days before the procedure. Consider putting the laxative in the freezer or refrigerator before drinking it. Some patients find it more palatable when it's cold.	

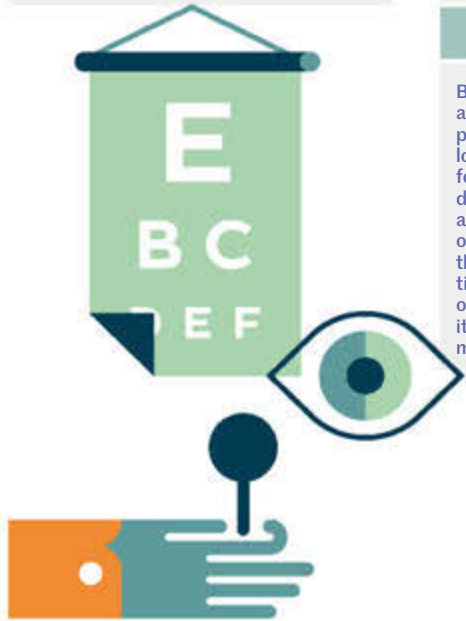
Anyone with inflammatory bowel disease should begin having colonoscopies after they've had the condition for about eight years, according to the American Cancer Society.

HEARING SCREENING

AGE YOU NEED IT	As a newborn
FREQUENCY	Every 2 to 4 years in childhood; if problems surface in adulthood.
IT CAN TELL YOU...	
If your hearing is normal or if you need further testing for hearing loss. If you don't pass the screening, which checks your ability to hear tones within normal limits (above a volume of 25 decibels), you may undergo an in-depth evaluation with an audiologist, who can map your hearing acuity and test for factors like your ability to understand words when it's quiet and when it's noisy.	
GOOD TO KNOW	
An estimated one in eight people in the United States has hearing loss in one or both ears, and approximately 15 percent of Americans between ages 20 and 69 have high-frequency hearing loss due to exposure to noise. "If you're considering a screening, begin by asking questions like 'Do I have a ringing in my ears? Do I play the TV louder than my family? Is it hard to follow conversations at group gatherings?'" says Pam Mason, a spokesperson for the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.	

DENTAL EXAM

AGE YOU NEED IT	As soon as you have teeth	FREQUENCY	Typically every 6 months, but talk to your dentist.
IT CAN TELL YOU...		GOOD TO KNOW	
If you have oral cancer, periodontal disease, tooth decay or grinding, or risk factors for other health issues. Plus, you'll leave the office with cleaner choppers, as an exam is typically paired with a cleaning.		Feeling anxious? Ask if you can listen to your iPod during the exam. "Headphones are wonderful—as long as they're not so loud that my patients can't hear me," says Alice Boghosian, D.D.S., a spokesperson for the American Dental Association.	



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HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS

Health-test calendar (cont.)



MAMMOGRAM	
AGE YOU NEED IT	40 and up. Women who have multiple family members with breast or ovarian cancer should talk to their doctors to find out if they need to start mammograms earlier.
FREQUENCY	Every 1 to 2 years
IT CAN TELL YOU...	
If you might have breast cancer. This breast X-ray highlights areas that look like a tumor. A bad mammogram doesn't always indicate cancer, which is why abnormal results are followed up with additional tests.	
GOOD TO KNOW	
Avoid scheduling an appointment the week before your period, which is when your breasts are probably most tender. "Some women experience discomfort during mammograms because of how the breast is positioned to get good views of breast tissue," says Bibbins-Domingo.	



PAP SMEAR	
AGE YOU NEED IT	21 to 65
FREQUENCY	Every 3 years
IT CAN TELL YOU...	
If you have cervical cancer or precancerous cells. However, an abnormal Pap doesn't necessarily mean cancer. Abnormal results, which are common, can indicate infection, irritation, or trauma.	
GOOD TO KNOW	
Women between the ages of 30 and 65 can space their Pap smears every 5 years, as long as they combine the screening with an HPV test. For accurate results, don't schedule a Pap test during your period. Ideally you should wait at least 5 days after the end of your cycle.	



SKIN-CANCER SCREENING	
AGE YOU NEED IT	18 and up, according to the Skin Cancer Foundation
FREQUENCY	Varies; some experts recommend annually.
IT CAN TELL YOU...	
If you have skin cancer. By inspecting every square inch of your body—including hard-to-see areas, like your scalp and between your toes—a dermatologist can find irregular moles, precancerous spots, and melanomas.	
GOOD TO KNOW	
Remove nail polish before an appointment so the doctor can examine your nails. And be honest, says Elizabeth K. Hale, M.D., vice president of the Skin Cancer Foundation. Tell your doctor about your SPF habits and if you're still hitting the tanning bed—even though you know you're not supposed to. That information can guide the dermatologist's exam.	



THYROID-DISEASE SCREENING	
AGE YOU NEED IT	50 and up, says the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Earlier if you or a primary family member has an autoimmune disease. In addition, women who are thinking about having children should consider getting tested before conceiving.
FREQUENCY	Every 5 years
IT CAN TELL YOU...	
If you have hypothyroidism (an underactive thyroid) or hyperthyroidism (an overactive thyroid). This screening measures the amount of thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH), which is secreted by the pituitary gland to regulate the thyroid, in your blood. Low levels of TSH point to hyperthyroidism, and high levels signal hypothyroidism.	
GOOD TO KNOW	
Thinking about starting a family? Get your thyroid checked. A mother's thyroid hormones are the only thyroid hormones a baby will get until week 12 of a pregnancy. Because these hormones are crucial for a baby's neural development, it's important to know if there are any issues before the first prenatal visit (usually done between weeks 10 and 12), according to Stephanie Lee, M.D., a spokesperson for the Endocrine Society.	

This test isn't automatically recommended to all women (by the U.S. Preventive Service Task Force or other authorities). And thyroid disease's symptoms can easily be mistaken for other disorders, so you may need to be proactive in asking for one.

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PHOTOS: (LEFT) IKEA; (RIGHT) WENDELL T. WEBBER

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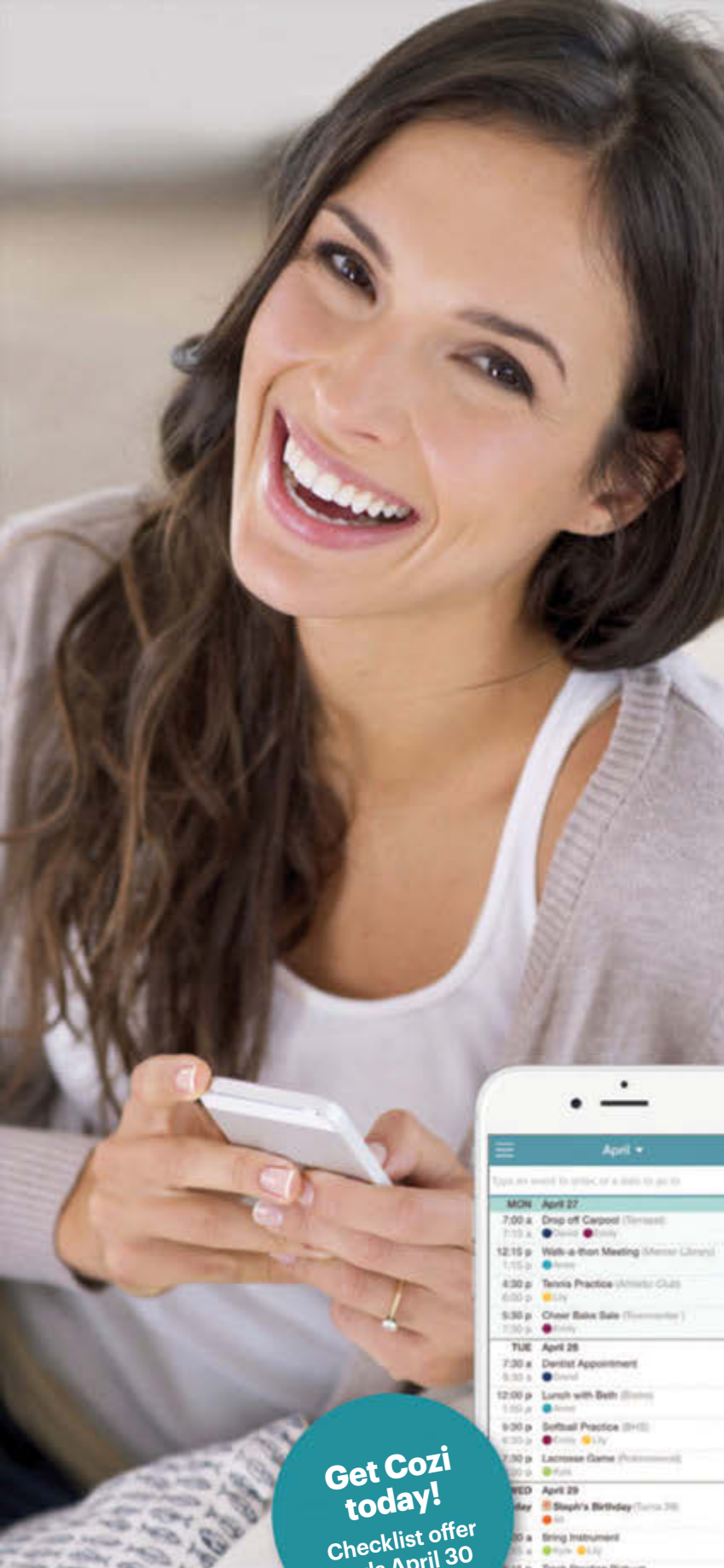
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PROP STYLING BY NOEMI BONAZZI

Photograph by Stephen Lewis



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Surprising strategies for securing your financial future

Save more, spend less, invest wisely—you know the broad strokes of building a nest egg. But the how-to can be elusive. Financial adviser *Manisha Thakor* offers fresh strategies you can take to the bank.

Written by Adriana Gardella

Increase your retirement-plan contributions each year.

“If your employer matches contributions to your 401(k), you should do whatever you can to take advantage. That means contributing at least as much as the company matches. But in addition, promise yourself you’ll increase your contribution 1 percent each year until you hit the cap. As in other aspects of life, small changes to financial habits stick best. Of course, if you can afford to contribute the maximum to your retirement account this year, by all means do so.”

Read two books.

“Virtually no one gets a formal education in handling personal finances. But just as parents-to-be read up on raising kids, *everyone* should hit the books on money. I recommend two painless titles: *Think, Act, and Invest Like Warren Buffett*, by Larry E. Swedroe, a thin 160 pages that provides a sensible approach for both novice and expert investors. And

The Behavior Gap, by Carl Richards. The title refers to the distance between what we *should* do when it comes to finances and what we *actually* do. It emphasizes using your head over your emotions in money matters.”

Understand risk.

“When most people think about risk, they consider only their *willingness* to take it. But the emotional part—your personal risk tolerance—is only one of three components of investment risk. Another is your *ability* to take risks, which depends on your age and income stability. For example, a tenured teacher has a high ability to take risks because her salary is secure; an entrepreneur may not. The third is your *need* to take a risk. Your need depends on the gap between your current nest egg and your ideal nest egg. If there’s a big discrepancy, you might be taking a risk by *not* taking a risk with investments.”

Strategies for securing your financial future (cont.)

Use only “fiduciary standard” financial advisers.

“Unlike doctors, lawyers, or accountants, who all have to measure up to a particular professional standard, financial advisers get to choose which of two standards to adhere to: a fiduciary standard or a suitability standard. The one you’re looking for is the fiduciary standard. Advisers who operate under this standard are legally obligated to put their clients’ best interests first—as in, they must be honest and objective. But most financial advisers don’t operate according to a fiduciary standard. Most function under a suitability standard, which means they have loyalty to their employer first, so they might not always be operating according to a client’s best interest. What? Yes. Shocking. To find out whom you’re dealing with, just ask.”

Make a will, already!

“Many Americans don’t have a will, but it’s absolutely essential—as is something called durable powers of attorney for financial and health matters. With no will, the state will decide how to divide your money. And if you become unable to make decisions related to your finances or health, you want to make sure your wishes are followed—that’s what durable powers of attorney are for. There are online companies that help you create wills and powers of attorney, but it’s difficult to tell which are reputable. Instead, set up an appointment with a local estate lawyer to draft these documents.”

FOR MORE FROM MANISHA THAKOR, THE DIRECTOR OF WEALTH STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN AT BUCKINGHAM, A ST. LOUIS-BASED FINANCIAL-ADVISORY FIRM, GO TO MONEYZEN.COM.

7 REAL SIMPLE RULES FOR...

Functional financial files

1

Once there’s an annual statement, **get rid of the weeklies or monthlies**, says productivity psychologist and pro organizer Melissa Grattias of Chattanooga (the expert behind the seven ideas here). This applies to paperwork for credit cards, banking, and investments, among other things. And when pay stubs turn into a W-2, shred or trash the pay stubs.

2

Keep receipts from online shopping in your in-box. **Drag them into a folder** and store them there. Or use OneReceipt, an app that automatically uploads e-mail receipts to the cloud. You can add paper receipts by snapping a picture.

3

Connect all your devices with an app called FileThis. Once you link it to your accounts, it **automatically downloads and files** your statements to its own cloud or to the cloud service of your choice (such as Dropbox, Evernote, or Google Drive). The app also allows you to scan and digitize paper documents from anywhere.

4

Convert e-mailed **financial statements to pdfs**. These are easy to file and easy to view on any computer. (E-mailed statements can get wonky when forwarded.) Then you’re all set if you need to send them to your accountant at tax time.

5

Scan or photocopy **hard-to-replace documents**, like deeds, insurance agreements, and paperwork from major purchases—essentially anything signed or notarized. Store them in a folder labeled IN CASE OF EMERGENCY (a.k.a. ICE), and include log-ins and passwords to all financial accounts, plus a durable power of attorney. (See left, “Make a will, already!”) If your ICE materials are paper, keep them in a **locked fireproof box**.

6

Hang on to **tax returns** for seven years, in case you need to make any amendments or you are audited. Save **property-sale and home-repair records** and property titles for three years after you sell a house.

7

If you’re gun-shy about trashing files, set up a folder called OLD to function as a **digital box of miscellany**. Drag in dead financial documents instead of deleting them. That way, you can keep your active files clean while taking comfort in the fact that nothing is gone forever.

Written by Yelena Moroz Alpert

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HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS

The essential tipping chart

A comprehensive guide to ease your mind when you're wondering whether to tip (probably) and how much to give.

THE GUIDE
work & money

 EVERYDAY LIFE						
APPLIANCE OR FURNITURE DELIVERY	 FOOD DELIVERY		 TRAVEL	HOTEL HOUSEKEEPING	 EXTRA CREDIT	
\$5 to \$10 a person	\$2 to \$4			\$2 a night at a budget hotel; \$3 to \$5 a night at a high-end hotel.		
Extra \$5 or \$10 each for assembly or for navigating a tough stairwell.	HAIR SHAMPOOER			Tip daily, since more than one housekeeper may clean your room.		
BARTENDER	HAIRSTYLIST OR COLORIST		AIRPORT SKYCAP OR PORTER	ROOM SERVICE		
\$1 a drink	15 percent		\$1 to \$3 per bag	15 to 20 percent of the meal's cost	BARISTA	Spare change or up to \$2
CAR WASHER	LAUNDRY OR DRY-CLEANING DELIVERY		BELLHOP	TAXI OR CAR-SERVICE DRIVER	BARTENDER AT AN OPEN-BAR EVENT	\$1 per drink
\$2 for a standard car, \$3 to \$5 for a large vehicle; 15 percent for detailing.	\$2 to \$5		\$1 or \$2 per bag delivered to your room	10 to 15 percent	Definitely tip for labor-intensive cocktails, like mojitos.	
COAT CHECKER	MANICURIST OR PEDICURIST		HOTEL CONCIERGE	Add an extra dollar or two if he helps with your luggage.	FLOWER DELIVERY	\$2 to \$5 per arrangement
\$1 per item	10 to 20 percent		\$5 to \$50		GIFT WRAPPER	\$1 to \$5 per item
DOG GROOMER	MOVERS	For standard help, go low; up it for special services, like hard-to-get theater tickets.			For extra-pretty work, go high.	
15 to 20 percent	\$20 to \$50 each				MAÎTRE D' OR HOSTESS	\$10 and up, depending on how fancy or in-demand the place is.
EMERGENCY ROADSIDE SERVICE PROVIDER	The harder the move, the bigger the tip.					
\$5 to \$20	SERVER					
If the service owner comes to tow you himself—or if the cost of the tow is insane—you can skip the tip.	15 to 20 percent					
	VALET PARKING					
	\$2 to \$5					
	WAXER OR THREADER					
	20 percent					

TIPS APPRECIATED, but not required.

Illustrations by Eight Hour Day

ICONS BY KATIE FIELD

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HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS

The essential tipping chart (cont.)

	SPECIAL EVENTS
BARTENDERS	A total of 10 percent of the final bill
CATERING MANAGER	\$200
CEREMONY MUSICIANS	15 percent (if there is a cost) or \$15 to \$25 each
CHEF	\$100
HAIRSTYLIST	15 to 20 percent
LIMO OR BUS DRIVER	15 percent

Weddings, quinceañeras, sweet sixteens, funerals.

	MAKEUP ARTIST
OFFICIANT	15 to 20 percent
PHOTOGRAPHER/VIDEOGRAPHER	\$100
PLANNER	15 percent
RECEPTION MUSICIANS	\$25 to \$50 each
WAITERS	\$20 each

	AT THE HOLIDAYS
BABYSITTER/NANNY	Money or a gift that's equivalent to one or two weeks' pay.
BUILDING SUPER	\$20 to \$100, depending on how helpful he or she has been.
CLEANING PERSON	Money or a gift that's equivalent to a week's pay.
DOORMAN	\$20 to \$100
LANDSCAPER/GARDENER	\$20 to \$50
	If he or she comes frequently, give up to a week's pay.

	NEWSPAPER CARRIER
	\$10 to \$30. Remember that adults usually do this job these days.
OTHER BUILDING STAFF	\$20 to \$50
	Check with your building association to see if there's a shared holiday tip pool.
TRASH/RECYCLING COLLECTORS	\$10 to \$30 each for a private service. For public service, check your local municipality for regulations; some areas may not allow tipping.

	JUST IN CASE
BODY PIERCER	\$5
PSYCHIC	15 to 20 percent
STRIPPERS AT A BACHELORETTE PARTY	\$100 to \$200 per entertainer
	This is in addition to smaller motivational bills delivered throughout the performance.
TATTOO ARTIST	20 percent

SKIP THE TIP

- Acupuncturist
- Bed-and-breakfast owner
- Bicycle-repair person
- Bouncer
- Cable installer
- Chiropractor or physical therapist
- Cobbler
- Dry cleaner
- Grocery bagger
- House sitter
- Laser-hair-removal specialist
- Makeup artist or cosmetologist at a store counter
- Personal trainer or yoga instructor
- Plumber
- Repair person
- Sports instructor (swimming, tennis, etc.)
- Tailor
- Tech expert/Geek Squad technician
- UPS, USPS, or FedEx delivery person





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Mother spies with her little eye
A street called Mulberry Way.
They turn the corner and lo & behold
It's grandma's house! Hurray!

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Features



PROP STYLING BY NOEMI BONAZZI

Photograph by Stephen Lewis

NO MORE MESSING AROUND

With three boys, five dogs, and zero storage strategies for all their stuff, this busy Texas family was desperate for an organizing intervention. *Real Simple* tackled their trouble spots from top to bottom and gave them an easy game plan that everyone can get on board with.

LIKE MOST FAMILIES, the Taos have a schedule so packed with work, school, and activities that it's tough to find time to straighten up. Gwen Tao, a physical therapist, and her husband Pete, an electrical engineer and college-football official, are raising three sons they adopted as babies: Isaiah, 10, and Caleb and Cody, both 14. The family has five rescue dogs, and they also open up their Drippings Springs, Texas, home to weekly community events, including Girl Scout troop meetings and Pilates classes, which take place in a room above the detached garage. Over the years, old papers and outdated electronics had filled the drawers and cabinets, spilling out onto the floor; miscellaneous items (yoga ball, ice cream maker) migrated to the laundry room; and

never-worn clothes, plush toys, and other unused objects invaded the master closet. The mess might have grown even more had it not been for the family's nanny, Caitlin McCollom, who took notice—and action. “I am writing on behalf of my boss,” her e-mail to *Real Simple* read. “Gwen is a wonderful woman, but her house needs organization so badly! If your editors could help her, it would be an enormous blessing.” And so the RS team swooped in for a whole-home overhaul, helping the Taos whittle down their belongings, contain them smartly, and establish some systems. The redo was transformational. “I had no idea how freeing it would be to scale down our stuff,” says Gwen. “With our new organizing strategies, we’re motivated to keep the house neat.”

Written by **Stephanie Sisco**
Photographs by **William Abranowicz**
Styling by **Chip Cordelli**

DINING ROOM

To make this area feel warm and welcoming—it's the heart of the home, after all—RS swapped out the white rug-on-rug for a colorful indoor-outdoor rug that's easy to vacuum. (Bonus: The bold design masks dirt.) Re-covering the chairs with a pretty patterned fabric also helped. The easy how-to: Pop out the seat, stretch the fabric over it, staple-gun taut in back, and pop the seat in. We also slimmed down the book and game collection and stored it on a smaller shelf unit.

TO BUY *Opposite:* Jallvik and Virserum frames, from \$7 each, ikea.com/us. Mali Indigo indoor-outdoor rug, \$1,142 (8 by 10 feet), dashandalbert.annieselke.com.



BEFORE An overpopulated bookcase and underpopulated walls dragged down the dining area.



**HANG A WALL OF
HOMEMADE ART**
Instead of piling
kids' creations
in a closet (where
we found some
of the pieces
shown here), put
them on display.
Command
medium picture-
hanging strips
help the frames
stay straight.

Gwen and Pete
Tao and their sons
(from left) Isaiah,
Caleb, and Cody
live with five dogs,
including Teddy
(under the table).

OFFICE

To transform this room's purpose from clutter catchall (see opposite page, bottom left) to efficient command center, the RS team installed a multilevel shelving unit above the desk to keep stationery, envelopes, and other office essentials hidden in plain sight. (Pete's collection of vintage comic books lives here, too.) We sorted the remaining paperwork into categories—school, summer school, medical, vets—then loaded the piles into clear labeled filing boxes with handles, designating one per cubby. A corner rolling cart serves as a streamlined printing area, with printer up top and paper supply below.

TO UNIFY A BUNCH OF SHELVES, pick storage boxes in a limited palette—no more than three colors. It's an easy way to instill order.

MAKE AN OFFICE SPACE LESS OFFICEY Pair a desk with a decorative chair instead of a standard rolling one. This leather chair has a sophisticated stitched border.



GIVE PETS A PLUSH SEAT A chic striped dog bed looks more like furniture than pet gear. With their new cushy spot to occupy, the Taos' pups keep Gwen company while she's working.

“This room was so crowded that I avoided it entirely. Now that it's neat, it's my favorite spot in the house.” —Gwen Tao

TRY A TRICK TO KEEP SURFACES CLEAR
Put a plant on top of a table or a bookshelf. It's a visual cue to keep that space sacred—i.e., junk-free.



TAME THE PAPER ONCE AND FOR ALL

Keep active files in easily accessible bins, like the clear handled ones here, and move files you don't need often (but still want to keep close) to a high shelf in a closet. Every three months, give the active files a once-over and shred or toss outdated documents to make room for new ones.



GIVE DAY-TO-DAY ESSENTIALS A HOME

A low shelf of cubbies separates the room from the hallway. Each family member gets a column of two for bags and backpacks. Gwen's are closest to the wall, beside a mounted organizer holding mail, permission slips, and bills to handle at the end of each week.



BEFORE
This room was a repository for the random. A keepsake quilt monopolized valuable space above the desk.

TO BUY This page, top left: Full of Leaves print in dark blue with white premium wood frame, \$138 (16 by 20 inches), minted.com. Slim open recycler, \$70, simplehuman.com. Portable file boxes, \$16 (black) and \$22 (clear) each, organizeit.com. This page, right: Hanging key holder, \$41, overstock.com. Wooden wall pocket, \$119, ballarddesigns.com. Mitzy baskets in espresso, \$15 each, worldmarket.com. Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Coffee & White Elf free-standing study, \$843; Bigso Stockholm office storage boxes in white, \$13 each; Grey Marten magazine files, \$13 each: containerstore.com. Original painting by Caitlin G. McCollom, cgmccollom.com for info. Grandview tall task lamp, \$249; Leather Schoolhouse chair, \$219: rejuvenation.com. Map of Texas with barn-wood frame, \$89 (11 inches square); Go Your Own Way print with barn-wood frame, \$179 (16 by 20 inches): minted.com. Go-Cart three-shelf table in white, \$129, cb2.com. Home Decorators Collection cut-to-width white premium faux-wood blinds, \$100 (72 inches), homedepot.com. Trimaran striped indoor-outdoor Wouf dog bed, \$180, freshamerican.annieselke.com. Pike office chair in gray, \$199, roomandboard.com. 2015 Great Big wall calendar, \$25; A2 multicolor stationery set, \$17: papersource.com.

MASTER CLOSET

This spot needed a relentless edit. Old clothes and shoes were boxed up and donated, and keepsakes, like the plush-toy collection, were stored in sealed bins in the garage. Now the remaining items can breathe! Storage racks keep all shoes visible and within reach, and clothes, sectioned by category and color, are hung on new slim, space-saving hangers. The hanging shelves in the middle hold favorite folded shirts; others are stored in the deep drawers at right. A small indoor-outdoor rug gives the closet a boutique look.

PICK YOUR BINS WISELY
Clear containers serve as visual reminders of seasonal extras. As in, "Hey, look: There's my striped summer bedding! Can't wait to use it in a couple months!"

MOVE NONESSENTIALS UP HIGH

The top shelf, reachable with a step stool, is reserved for occasional-use items, like travel bags and formal shoes.

FIND A FIX FOR TRICKY ITEMS

Boot shapers keep tall styles from toppling over. Without them, floppy footwear would derail Gwen and Pete's organizing efforts.



BEFORE With shoe bins stuffed beyond their brims, unmarked cardboard boxes, and stuffed animals taking up prime shelf space, the master closet was maxed-out.



TO BUY *Real Simple* slimline flocked suit hangers, \$30 for 50; *Real Simple* boot shapers, \$8 for two pairs; *Real Simple* six-shelf hanging organizer, \$20: bedbathandbeyond.com.

LAUNDRY ROOM

SWITCH UP YOUR SPACE
This was supposed to be a spot for hang-drying delicates, but the family didn't need that. New use: coat closet and repository for Pete's officiating gear.

HANG MORE THAN JUST JACKETS
Hats that get a lot of use belong in a grab-and-go spot, just like other outerwear favorites.

The Taos enter the house through a nearby door, so RS morphed this into a laundry/mudroom. (Lesson: One room can serve two purposes, as long as the purposes are clearly defined.) Two multipronged hooks hold everyday jackets. A punchy striped doormat defines the mudroom area just like a rug would. Baskets above the washer and dryer hold beach towels, extra linens, and pillows (and leave no surplus surface area for stuff that strays). Pushing the appliances together gave them a neater look and left an eight-inch space at the right to slot in a step stool.



DON'T NEGLECT THE DRAWERS
Laundry detergents and cleaning formulas are tucked into this trio of drawers, which were previously stuffed with outdated manuals and mail-order forms.

BEFORE This room's ample square footage (14 by 8 feet) tempted the family to drop off more than just dirty clothes.

TO BUY Clockwise from top left: Our Men's Shoe Boxes, \$3.80 each, containerstore.com. Dyson AM05 Hot + Cool fan heater, \$400, dyson.com. Tanker clock in Swiss chocolate, \$199, schoolhouseelectric.com. Two-Pecks baskets in navy bead, \$228 each, habeleconstruction.com. Slate and cast-iron dog-tail leash holder, \$30, plowandhearth.com. Werner two-step step stool, \$23, lowes.com. Half-tone floor baskets, \$59 each, landofnod.com. Black-and-gray striped doormat, \$39, rejuvenation.com. Mollie hooks in peacock blue and antique black, \$69 each, schoolhouseelectric.com. Honey-Can-Do wooden suit hangers, \$9 for four, bedbathandbeyond.com.

KITCHEN

Clearing off the surfaces and the floor was the cure for this cook space. Cutting boards and the most frequently used cookware and appliances stayed put, but the rest of the counter was preserved for prepping. We even extended the work area on the 24-by-36-inch island by securing a larger butcher block (about \$200 at Lumber Liquidators) on top with brackets.

LIGHTEN UP

A dark, bulky ceiling fixture weighs down a space. Give it a few coats of white paint and the room is instantly airier.

PLACE EVERYDAY TOOLS WITHIN REACH
No more having to hunt for a dish towel or an oven mitt if you stick a few adhesive hooks in a central spot, like on the kitchen island.

BEFORE Kitchen tools, rogue food, and knickknacks crowded the counters and the tops of the cabinets.



STOCK A TABLE-SETTING STATION
Keep your most-used plates, utensils, and napkins on a rolling cart to make dinner service a cinch (and let the kids pitch in).

TO BUY Clockwise from left: Traditional Classics weathered-nickel cabinet knobs, \$4.30 each, homedepot.com. Cuisinart metal classic four-slice toaster, \$55; Denmark 10-piece ceramic nonstick aluminum cookware set, \$100: bedbathandbeyond.com. Wallies removable chalk panels, \$20 for four; classic bistro chalk markers, \$14 for four: papersource.com. Stenstorp kitchen cart, \$199, ikea.com/us. Real Simple Round dinnerware in white, \$25 for a four-piece place setting, bedbathandbeyond.com. Large bronze York open-stack baskets, \$25 each; utility hooks (on underside of butcher block), \$3 for four: containerstore.com. Aster striped dish towels, \$6 each, crateandbarrel.com. Edge-y cutting board in charcoal, \$118; Dipper ceramic dog bowls, \$22 (medium): waggo.com.

MOST VALUABLE PEGBOARD
A go-to for tools and oddly shaped gear, to keep everything within arm's reach. And it's easily adaptable as you add to it.

MAXIMIZE SPACE WITH METRO SHELVING
Super-sturdy and customizable to reach different heights, it's a great hardware-store find (about \$100 for the size shown) for garages.

GARAGE

To help the family keep track of its large pieces of luggage, camping equipment, pet supplies, and home-improvement tools, RS first got it all off the floor, then sorted and stored it in categorized sections. Tools were mounted, suitcases stashed on top shelves, and the rest neatly arranged in large, clear bins below.

COVER THE FLOOR
Interlocking rubber tiles cordon off a parking spot and keep clutter from encroaching. They also prevent car fluids from staining the garage floor.

BEFORE Items stored on a shelving unit had little rhyme or reason.

TO BUY Clockwise: Iris plastic storage boxes, \$22 each, organizeit.com. Grook utility holder, \$15 (small), containerstore.com. Indoor-outdoor striped polypropylene rug, \$53 (3 feet, 7 inches by 5 feet, 6 inches), overstock.com. Gray PVC multipurpose raised-coin garage flooring, \$40 for six tiles; and flooring trim kit, \$30 for 18 edges: craftsman.com.

1/ TIP OFF

Precuring, keep a few cotton swabs dipped in acetone remover nearby to clean up smudges.

PRETTY **BASIC**

Looks can be deceiving. Gorgeous grooming may seem complicated, but really it all boils down to a few—OK, five—fundamental skills.

Written by Didi Gluck

Photographs by Barbara Donninelli



**2 / PRODUCT
PLACEMENT**

When applying bronzer, start where the cheekbone and ear meet and work forward.

1 GEL MANICURE

Let us count the ways this manicure advancement has simplified life: long-lasting color (10 days to two weeks), instantly dry tips, and loads of shine. Doing an at-home gel manicure is just like doing a regular one—except you're curing the color onto your nails with an LED light. That LED is an investment. You'll need to buy a gel-mani starter kit, like the **Red Carpet Manicure Starter Kit** (\$75, redcarpetmanicure.com). But stay with us here: It's a onetime purchase, after which you can simply replenish the polishes.

STEP 1: Prep your nails: Remove old polish, file tips, push back cuticles, and trim hanging skin with a nipper.

STEP 2: On each nail, paint on a layer of the gel base coat that comes with the kit.

STEP 3: Place four fingers of one hand (index to pinkie) under the lamp for about two minutes (times vary by lamp); repeat with the thumb for the same amount of time. (If you cram in all five digits of one hand, the LED may not reach each nail, says Kiyo Okada, the New York City manicurist who worked on this story.)

STEP 4: Repeat with two layers of the gel color and one of the clear gel topcoat that comes with the kit, curing nails for the time instructed between each coat of polish.

HAIR BY PAUL WARREN USING RENE FURTERER FOR ART DEPARTMENT; MAKEUP BY GREGG BROCKINGTON USING MAC COSMETICS FOR JUDY CASEY; MANICURE BY KIYO OKADA FOR YVES DURIF SALON.

3 / MAKE WAVES
It doesn't matter which way you twist the flatiron when "curling." Aim for ripples, not ringlets.



3 BEACHY WAVES

Step away from the curling iron. You read that right. As the name implies, "a curling iron makes curls, not waves," says Paul Warren, the New York City hairstylist who created the modern-classic look above. The necessary tool, in this case, is a flatiron.

STEP 1: Clamp the flatiron at the roots of a two-inch-wide section or hair. (The skinnier the plates, the more pronounced the wave will be.)

STEP 2: Twist your wrist while holding the tool so that a small bend forms in your hair.

STEP 3: Unclamp and reclamp the iron an inch down from the bend, and twist your wrist again to form another one. Keep moving down the section of hair this way, stopping just short of the ends (so they don't flip up). Continue around your whole head.

STEP 4: Instead of holding with hair spray, mist on a texturizing spray, says Warren. It will create a matte finish, like your hair gets when you've been in salt water. We like **Kérastase Spray A Porter** (\$36, kerastase-usa.com).



MORE LOOKS YOU'LL LOVE

Go to realsimple.com/cultclassics for 18 beauty products sure to shake up your hair and makeup routines.

2 SCULPTED CHEEKS

A plethora of more natural-looking powders plus updated application techniques have given this cheek-defining technique a much needed face-lift.

STEP 1: Start with foundation and powder as usual. (Or skip it if there's nothing usual about foundation and powder for you.)

STEP 2: Sweep matte bronzer a shade or two deeper than your skin tone (or foundation) from your temples to your cheekbones to your jawbones, as if drawing the number 3, says Gregg Brockington, the New York City makeup artist who did the makeup on these pages.

STEP 3: Blend pink blush just on the apples of your cheeks for contrast. Try the **Giordano Beauty Tan Lines Bronzing Compact** (\$24, giordanobeauty.com) and **Chanel Joues Contraste Powder Blush in Pink Explosion** (\$45, chanel.com).

4 FALSE LASHES

All the makeup in the world will take you only so far. For dramatic length, you need to enlist fake lashes. For ease and speed, Brockington suggests using strip lashes rather than individual pieces. Consider **B The Eyebrow Experts Classic Strip Lashes** (\$20, saksfifthavenue.com).

STEP 1: Cut the lash into three pieces. Working in small sections is more manageable than trying to adhere a whole strip.

STEP 2: Using a flat-tipped makeup brush, paint a thin layer of lash glue onto the base of each lash section, as well as onto your lid (where you would normally place eyeliner). Allow to dry for 60 seconds.

STEP 3: Working from the inner corner of the eye out, place each section on the lid.

STEP 4: Use a tweezer or even the rounded edge of a clean emory board to gently push the base of each section of the strip firmly into the glue for lasting adhesion.

STEP 5: Wait a minute until the glue is completely clear and dry before sweeping mascara onto your lashes plus the fakes, which helps the two bind together.

5 FULL LIPS

With a touch—literally—of shimmer, anyone can create the illusion of bigger lips.

STEP 1: Using a lip pencil that matches the natural color of your lips, draw slightly (*slightly*) outside the perimeter of your lip line and fill in, says Brockington.

STEP 2: Follow with a matching lipstick.

STEP 3: Next, dab a nude lip pencil with shimmer onto your pointer finger, then pat the color onto the center of your lower lip. This will create a light-reflecting surface that makes lips appear larger. Try **Kevyn Aucoin nude lipsticks and pencils** (kevynaucoin.com) and **NYX Jumbo Lip Pencil in Bronze** (\$4.50, nyxcosmetics.com).

A close-up, three-quarter view of a woman's face. She has light blue eyes, well-defined eyebrows, and is wearing dark, voluminous false eyelashes. Her lips are coated in a matte, reddish-pink lipstick. The skin is fair and has a soft, natural-looking glow. Two callout lines originate from the text blocks: one points to the upper eyelashes and the other points to the lower lip.

4/ EYE CARE

To remove falsies, gently clean eyes with make-up remover, then carefully peel off the lashes with tweezers and store them. They're reusable.

5/ LINER NOTE

Start by outlining the bow (a.k.a. the V), making sure each side mirrors the other.



BEST CHICKEN
CHICKEN AND
VEGETABLE POTPIE
FEBRUARY 2009

Your 15 All-Time Favorite Real Simple Recipes

We asked, and thousands of you answered. Here are the dishes most bookmarked, dog-eared, clipped, shared, and enjoyed—from once-a-week slow-cooker chicken to special-occasion chocolate cake. Simply put, they're keepers.

Photographs by Roland Bello | Food Styling by Maggie Ruggiero | Set Design by Jeffrey W. Miller

BEST TACO
GRILLED SHRIMP TACOS
JUNE/JULY 2008



Chicken and Vegetable Potpie

HANDS-ON TIME **35 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR, 10 MINUTES**
SERVES **6**

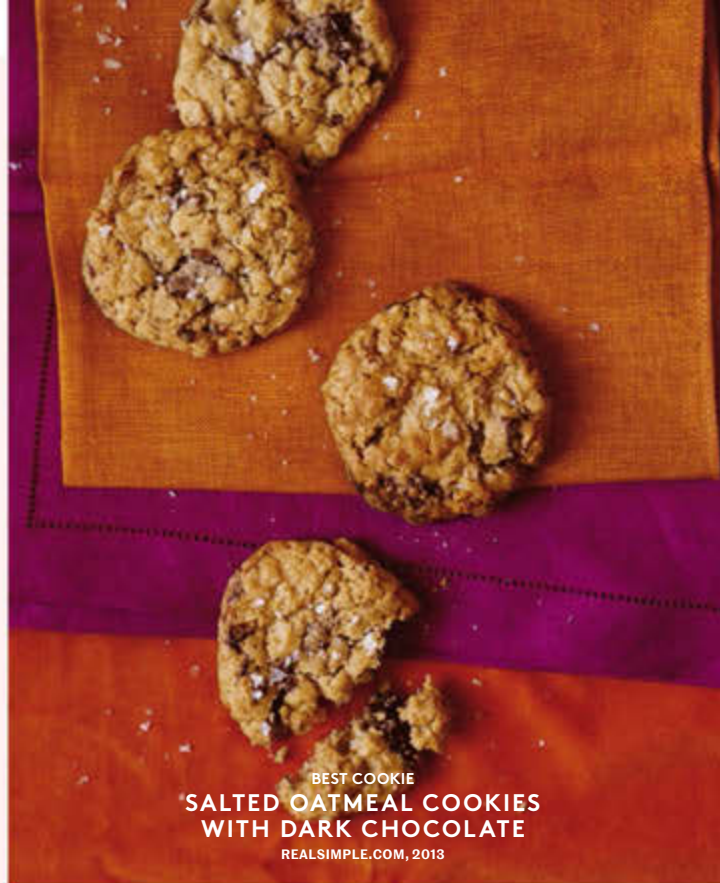
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 onions, chopped
- 4 carrots, diced
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 2 cups 1 percent milk
- 1 10-ounce package frozen peas
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 9-inch store-bought piecrust, thawed if frozen

HEAT oven to 400° F. Cook the chicken in a pot of simmering water until cooked through, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool, then shred.

MEANWHILE, heat the oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the onions and carrots and cook, stirring, until they begin to soften, 6 to 8 minutes. (Do not let them darken.) Sprinkle the flour over the vegetables and cook, stirring, for 1 minute.

ADD the wine and cook until evaporated, about 5 minutes. Add the milk and simmer until the sauce thickens, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the chicken, peas, thyme, ¼ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Transfer to a 1½- to 2-quart baking dish.

LAY the crust on top, pressing the edge to seal. Cut several vents in the crust. Place the potpie on a baking sheet and bake until the filling is bubbling and the crust is golden, 30 to 35 minutes.



BEST COOKIE
**SALTED OATMEAL COOKIES
WITH DARK CHOCOLATE**
REALSIMPLE.COM, 2013

- 2 teaspoons flaky sea salt (such as Maldon)
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 4 tablespoons vegetable shortening
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 6 ounces bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped

HEAT oven to 375° F with the racks in the upper and lower thirds. Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment.

COMBINE the oats, flour, baking soda, cinnamon, and 1 teaspoon of the salt in a medium bowl. Set aside.

BEAT the butter, shortening, granulated sugar, and brown sugar with an electric mixer on medium-high speed until lightly and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes. Beat in the egg and vanilla. Reduce mixer speed to low and gradually add the flour mixture, mixing just until combined. (Do not overmix.) Stir in the chocolate.

DROP heaping tablespoonfuls of the dough onto the prepared baking sheets, spacing them 2 inches apart. Sprinkle with the remaining 1 teaspoon of salt.

BAKE, rotating the pans halfway through, until lightly brown around the edges, 10 to 12 minutes. Cool slightly on the baking sheets, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

Grilled Shrimp Tacos

HANDS-ON TIME **35 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **35 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- ½ cup sour cream
- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 3 tablespoons milk
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 1½ pounds raw large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- 4 limes, cut into quarters
- Kosher salt
- 8 6-inch corn tortillas
- 2 to 3 cups finely shredded green cabbage
- Jarred green tomatillo salsa

HEAT grill to medium-high. In a small bowl, whisk together the sour cream, mayonnaise, milk, and cumin. Set aside.

SKEWER the shrimp. (If using wood skewers, soak them in water for 10 minutes beforehand.) In a small bowl, combine the butter and garlic. Brush the shrimp with the garlic butter.

PLACE the shrimp on the grill with the limes. Cook for about

4 minutes on each side or until the shrimp are opaque and the limes are browned.

REMOVE from grill. Lightly salt the shrimp.

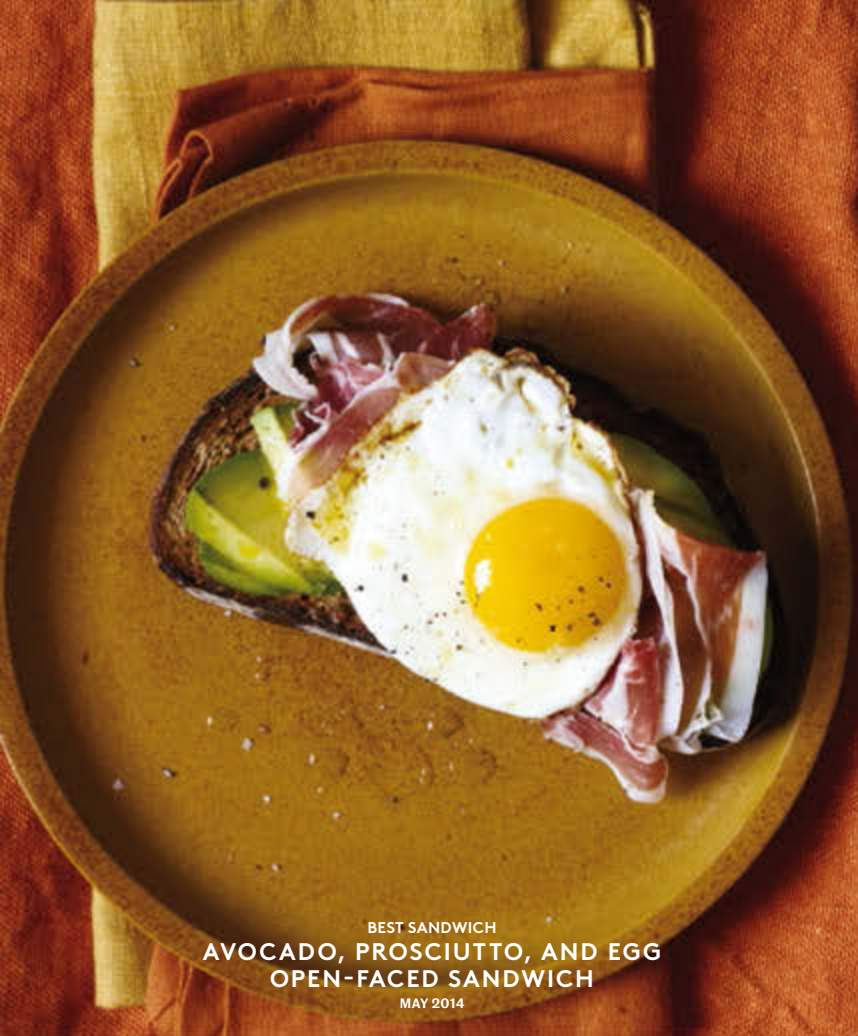
GRILL the tortillas for 30 seconds on each side, then place inside a paper bag to keep warm.

PULL the shrimp off the skewers and divide evenly among the tortillas. Top with the cabbage, sour cream sauce, tomatillo salsa, and a squeeze of juice from the grilled lime.

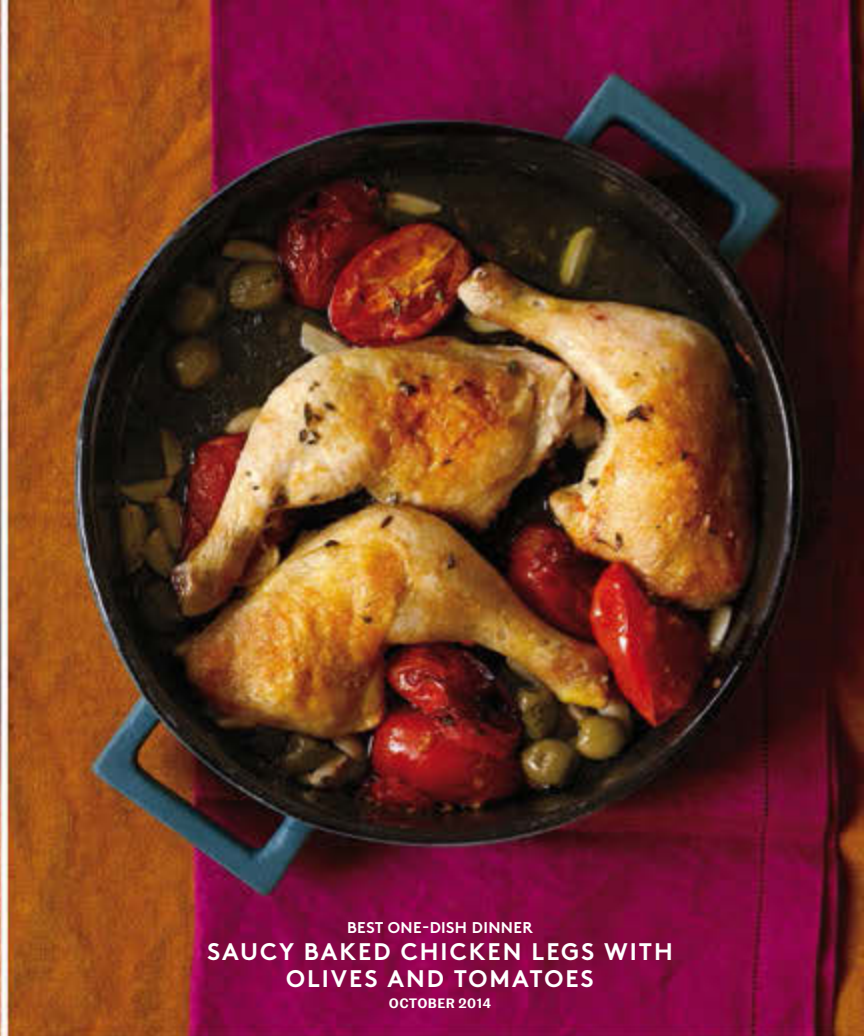
Salted Oatmeal Cookies with Dark Chocolate

HANDS-ON TIME **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **55 MINUTES**
MAKES **2 DOZEN COOKIES**

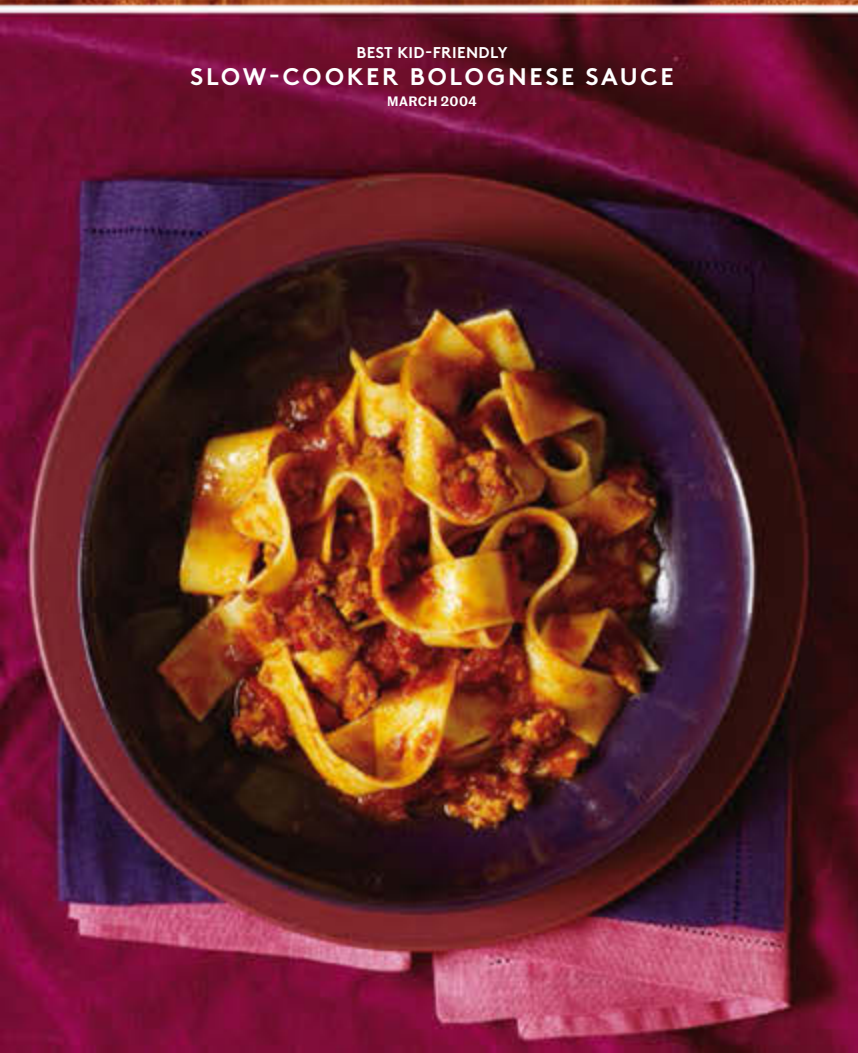
- 2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats (not quick-cooking)
- 1 cup all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon



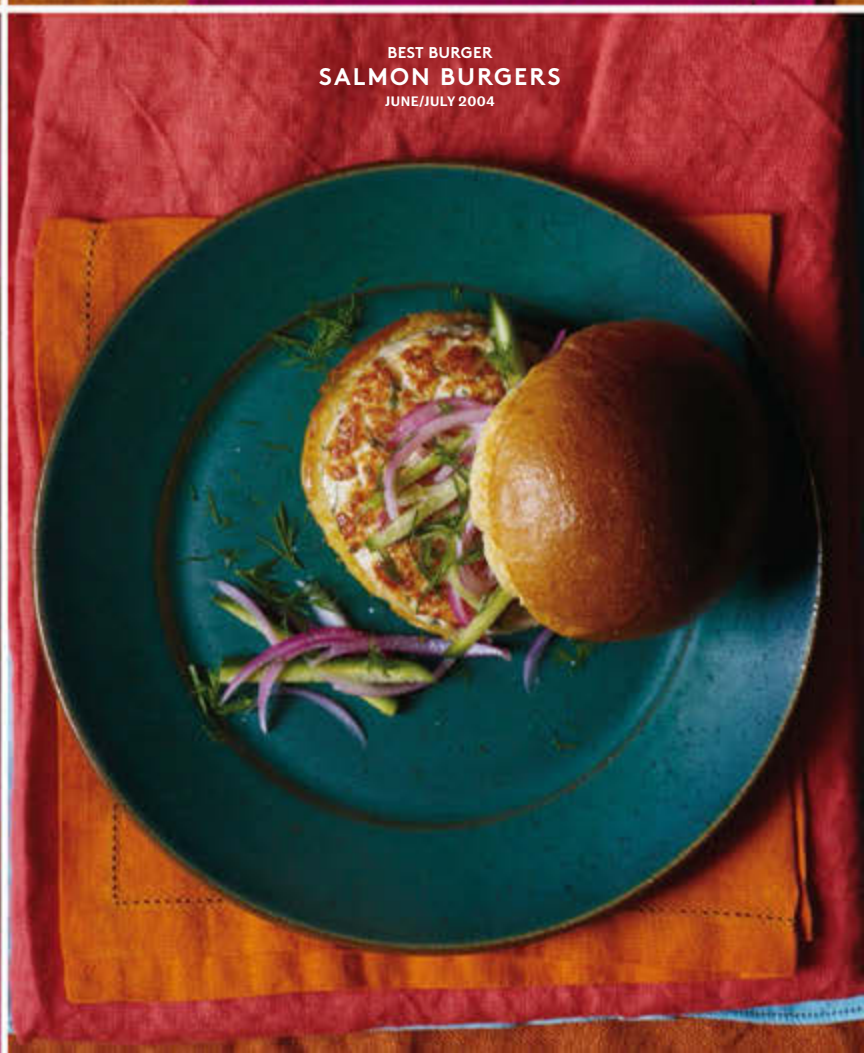
BEST SANDWICH
AVOCADO, PROSCIUTTO, AND EGG
OPEN-FACED SANDWICH
MAY 2014



BEST ONE-DISH DINNER
SAUCY BAKED CHICKEN LEGS WITH
OLIVES AND TOMATOES
OCTOBER 2014



BEST KID-FRIENDLY
SLOW-COOKER BOLOGNESE SAUCE
MARCH 2004



BEST BURGER
SALMON BURGERS
JUNE/JULY 2004

Avocado, Prosciutto, and Egg Open-Faced Sandwich

HANDS-ON TIME **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **15 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- 2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for serving
- 4 large eggs
 - Kosher salt and black pepper
- 4 large slices country bread, toasted
- 1 avocado, sliced
- 2 ounces sliced prosciutto

HEAT the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the eggs and cook, covered, for 2 to 4 minutes for slightly runny yolks. Season with $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon each salt and pepper.

DIVIDING evenly, top the bread with the avocado, prosciutto, and eggs.

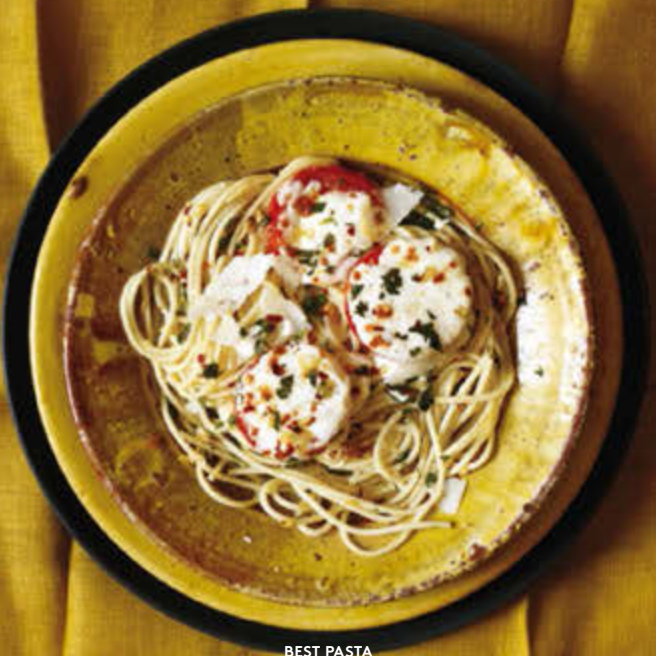
SERVE drizzled with additional oil and sprinkled with pepper.

Saucy Baked Chicken Legs with Olives and Tomatoes

HANDS-ON TIME **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR**
SERVES **4**

- 1 pound plum or small tomatoes, halved if large
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pitted green olives
- 8 cloves garlic, quartered
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
- 4 bone-in, skin-on chicken legs
 - Kosher salt and black pepper

HEAT oven to 425° F with a rack in the highest position. Toss the tomatoes, olives, garlic, oil, and thyme in a 3-quart baking dish. Season the chicken with



BEST PASTA
BASIL SPAGHETTI WITH CHEESY BROILED TOMATOES

JUNE 2011

1 teaspoon salt and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper. Nestle the chicken, skin-side up, in the vegetables.

BAKE until the chicken is browned and an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest leg (avoiding bone) registers 165° F, 40 to 45 minutes.

SERVE warm.

Slow-Cooker Bolognese Sauce

HANDS-ON TIME **35 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **4 HOURS, 35 MINUTES TO 8 HOURS, 35 MINUTES**
SERVES **12**

- 1 medium onion, finely chopped ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup)
- 1 stalk celery, finely chopped
- 1 carrot, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 pound ground beef
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pound ground pork
- 1 cup milk
- 1 6-ounce can tomato paste
- 6 14-ounce cans diced tomatoes

- 4 teaspoons kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Long pasta (such as pappardelle), for serving

IN A large skillet, combine the onion, celery, carrot, and olive oil and cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until tender, about 10 minutes.

ADD the meat and cook, stirring frequently, until it loses its pink color. Add the milk. Increase heat to high and cook until the milk has evaporated. Transfer the mixture to a 4- to 6-quart slow cooker.

RETURN the skillet to the heat and add the tomato paste. Cook over low heat for about 5 minutes. Add the tomato paste to the slow cooker, along with the diced tomatoes, salt, and nutmeg.

COOK on low for 8 hours or on high for 4 hours. Serve warm over pappardelle or some other long pasta.

Salmon Burgers

HANDS-ON TIME **25 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **35 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- 2 pounds salmon fillet, skin removed
- 2 egg whites
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh bread crumbs (from 2 slices white bread, ground in a food processor)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
 - Kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons olive oil (if cooking on a stovetop)
- 4 brioche buns, toasted
 - Mayonnaise, yogurt, thinly sliced onion, and pickles (optional), for serving

HEAT grill or stovetop to medium.

FINELY chop the salmon. Place half in a large resealable plastic bag and use a flat-surfaced meat pounder or a rolling pin to mash it.

PLACE all the salmon in a large bowl. Combine with the egg whites, mustard, bread crumbs, dill, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt. Form into four $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick patties.

PLACE the patties on the grill. Cook for 4 to 5 minutes per side. (On a stovetop, heat the oil in a grill pan over medium heat and cook the patties for 5 minutes per side.)

SERVE the patties on the buns, with the toppings of your choice.

Basil Spaghetti with Cheesy Broiled Tomatoes

HANDS-ON TIME **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **30 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- 12 ounces spaghetti
- 3 large beefsteak tomatoes (about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds), each cut into 4 thick slices
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for the baking sheet

BEST SOUP
MEXICAN CHICKEN SOUP
MARCH 2006



- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 8 ounces fresh mozzarella, grated
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan (1 ounce), plus more, shaved, for serving
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- ¼ to ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- ¾ cup sliced fresh basil leaves, plus more for serving

HEAT broiler. Cook the pasta according to the package directions; drain and return it to the pot.

MEANWHILE, arrange the tomato slices in a single layer on a lightly oiled rimmed baking sheet. Season with ¼ teaspoon each salt and black pepper. Dividing evenly, sprinkle the slices with the mozzarella and Parmesan. Broil until the cheese is bubbling and golden, 3 to 5 minutes.

WARM the oil with the garlic and red pepper in a small saucepan over medium heat until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes.

ADD the garlic oil, basil, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon black pepper to the pasta and toss to combine. Serve topped with the tomatoes, additional basil, and shaved Parmesan.

Mexican Chicken Soup

HANDS-ON TIME **25 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR, 35 MINUTES**
SERVES **6**

- 2 whole chickens (3½ pounds each)
- 4 carrots, halved crosswise
- 1 large yellow onion, halved
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1½ cups long-grain white rice
- 2 avocados, halved
- ½ cup fresh cilantro leaves
- 3 limes, halved



BEST LAMB
**SLOW-COOKER LAMB, APRICOT,
AND OLIVE TAGINE**
FEBRUARY 2012

PLACE the chickens, carrots, onion, and salt in a 12-quart pot. Add enough cold water (about 16 cups) to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer gently, uncovered, for 1 hour. Skim off any foam that appears.

TRANSFER the chickens to plates and let cool. Remove the carrots and onion with a slotted spoon and discard. Add the rice to the broth and simmer for 20 minutes.

MEANWHILE, shred the chicken meat, discarding the skin and bones. Add the meat and ¼ teaspoon pepper to the broth and heat for 3 minutes.

SCOOP the avocado halves from the peels and divide between the bowls (or quarter and divide between the bowls). Ladle the soup over the top. Sprinkle with the cilantro and add a squeeze of lime juice.

Slow-Cooker Lamb, Apricot, and Olive Tagine

HANDS-ON TIME **30 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **5½ HOURS TO 8½ HOURS**
SERVES **4**

- 1½ pounds lamb shoulder, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 4 carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- ½ cup dried apricots, halved
- ½ cup pitted green olives
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 cup couscous
- Chopped pistachios, fresh cilantro leaves, and lemon wedges, for serving

IN A 4- to 6-quart slow cooker, mix together the lamb, carrots, onion, apricots, olives, garlic, flour, paprika, cumin, cinnamon, ginger, 1 teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper, and ½ cup water.

COVER and cook until the lamb and vegetables are tender, on low for 8 hours or on high for 5 hours.

TEN minutes before serving, cook the couscous according to the package directions. Serve the lamb over the couscous with the pistachios, cilantro, and lemon wedges.

Deep-Dish Sausage, Ricotta, and Onion Pizza with Tangy Romaine

HANDS-ON TIME **30 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR, 10 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ pound Italian sausage, casings removed
- ¾ pound store-bought pizza dough, at room temperature
- 6 ounces mozzarella, grated (about 1½ cups)
- ¾ cup marinara sauce
- ¼ small red onion, thinly sliced
- ½ cup ricotta
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 2 romaine hearts, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

HEAT oven to 400° F with a rack in the lowest position. Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add the sausage and cook, breaking it up into large pieces with a spoon, until golden brown but still pink in the middle, 4 to 6 minutes.

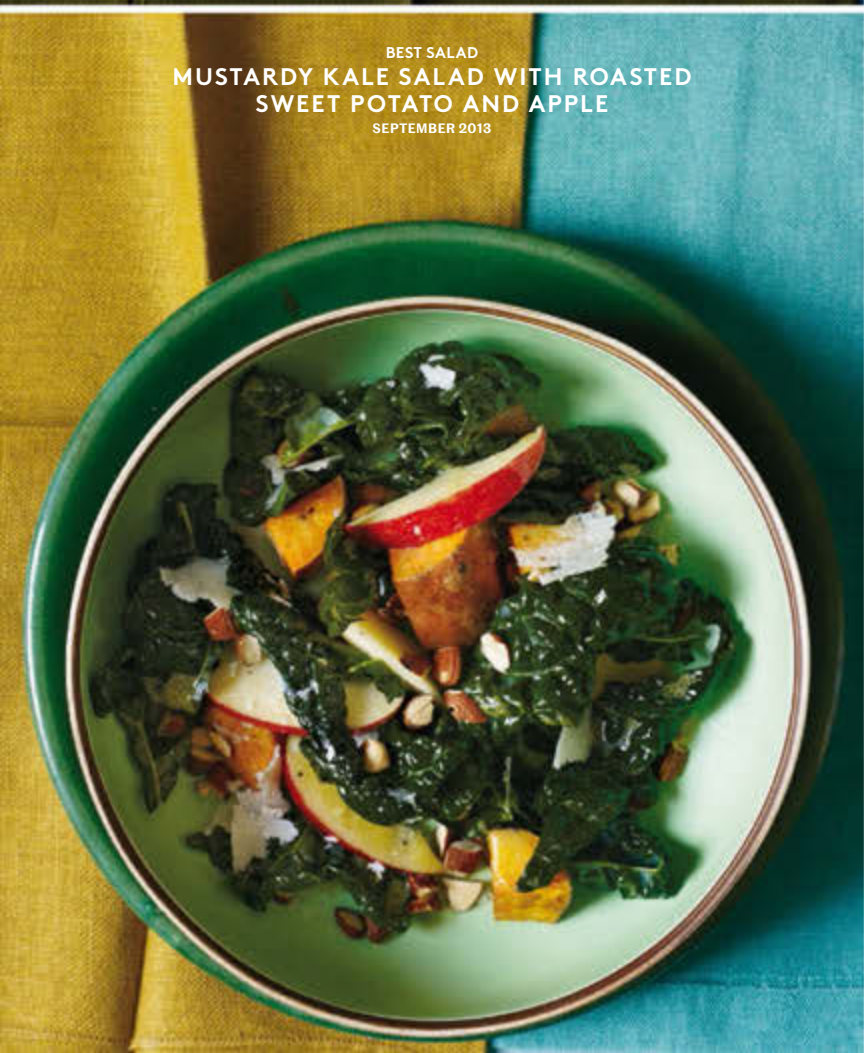
COAT a 9-inch cake pan with 1 tablespoon of the oil. Press the dough into the pan, covering the bottom and sides. Top the



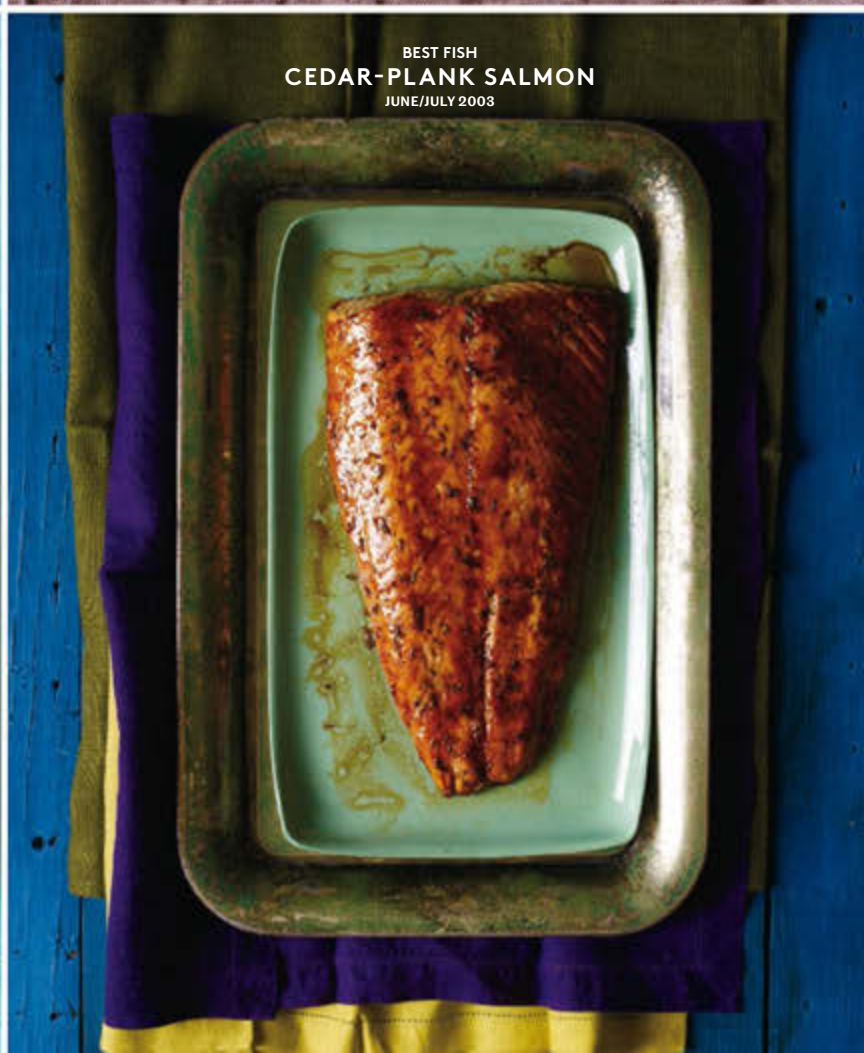
BEST PIZZA
DEEP-DISH SAUSAGE, RICOTTA,
AND ONION PIZZA WITH TANGY ROMAINE
MARCH 2014



BEST SLOW-COOKER
CHICKEN TIKKA MASALA
JANUARY 2012



BEST SALAD
MUSTARDY KALE SALAD WITH ROASTED
SWEET POTATO AND APPLE
SEPTEMBER 2013



BEST FISH
CEDAR-PLANK SALMON
JUNE/JULY 2003

dough, in this order, with the mozzarella, marinara, onion, and cooked sausage. Bake until the crust is golden brown, 30 to 35 minutes. Top with the ricotta and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Bake until the ricotta is warm, 3 to 4 minutes more. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

MEANWHILE, toss together the romaine, lemon juice, the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil, and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper in a medium bowl.

SERVE the pizza warm, topped with half the romaine. Serve the remaining romaine on the side.

Slow-Cooker Chicken Tikka Masala

HANDS-ON TIME **10 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **4 HOURS, 10 MINUTES TO 8 HOURS, 10 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- 1 15-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 teaspoons garam masala (Indian spice blend)
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs (about 8)
- ½ English cucumber, halved and thinly sliced
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 cup basmati or some other long-grain white rice
- ½ cup heavy cream

IN A 4- to 6-quart slow cooker, combine the tomatoes, onion, garlic, tomato paste, garam masala, ¾ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Place the chicken on top of the vegetables, cover, and cook until the

chicken is tender, on low for 7 to 8 hours or on high for 3 to 4 hours.

IN A small bowl, toss the cucumber and cilantro with the lemon juice and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate for up to 8 hours.

TWENTY minutes before serving, cook the rice according to the package directions.

JUST before serving, stir the cream into the chicken tikka masala. Serve over the rice with the cucumber relish.

Mustardy Kale Salad with Roasted Sweet Potato and Apple

HANDS-ON TIME **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **35 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

- 2 sweet potatoes (about 2 pounds), cut into ¾-inch pieces
- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2 bunches Tuscan or lacinato kale or 1 medium bunch curly kale, thick stems removed and leaves torn into bite-size pieces (about 10 cups)
- 1 Pink Lady or Honeycrisp apple, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup chopped roasted almonds
- 4 ounces shaved pecorino

HEAT oven to 400° F. Toss the sweet potatoes with 2 tablespoons of the oil and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper on 2 rimmed baking sheets.

ROAST, rotating the sheets and tossing the potatoes halfway through, until lightly browned and tender, 18 to 20 minutes. Let cool slightly.

MEANWHILE, whisk together the lemon juice, mustard, the remaining 4 tablespoons of oil, and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper in a large bowl.

ADD the kale and rub together with clean hands to tenderize and coat the leaves. Add the apple, almonds, and sweet potatoes and toss together.

SERVE the salad topped with the shaved pecorino.

Cedar-Plank Salmon

HANDS-ON TIME **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1½ HOURS**
SERVES **4**

- 1 2-pound skin-on salmon fillet
- 1 cedar plank, soaked in water for 20 minutes
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme leaves
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

PREHEAT a gas grill to high; adjust to medium low after 15 minutes. (If cooking over charcoal, allow the coals to burn until they are covered with white ash.)

PLACE the salmon skin-side down on the cedar plank.

COMBINE the brown sugar, oil, thyme, and cayenne in a bowl. Brush over the salmon.

PLACE the planked salmon on the grilling grate and cook, with the grill covered, until mostly cooked through but still slightly pink in the middle, about 40 minutes.

Flourless Chocolate Cake

HANDS-ON TIME **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **2 HOURS**
(INCLUDES COOLING TIME)
SERVES **10**

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, cut into pieces, plus more for the pan
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder, plus more for dusting
- 1¼ cups heavy cream
- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- 5 large eggs
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup crème fraîche or sour cream
- ¼ cup confectioners' sugar

HEAT oven to 350° F. Butter a 9-inch springform pan and dust with cocoa powder.

IN A medium saucepan, heat the butter with ¼ cup of the heavy cream over medium-low heat until the butter is melted. Add the chocolate and stir until melted and smooth; remove from heat.

IN A medium bowl, whisk together the eggs, granulated sugar, and cocoa powder. Whisk in the chocolate mixture.

TRANSFER the batter to the prepared pan and bake until puffed and set, 35 to 40 minutes. Let cool in the pan for 1 hour. Run a knife around the edge of the cake before unmolding.

USING an electric mixer, beat the remaining 1 cup of heavy cream with the crème fraîche and confectioners' sugar until soft peaks form. Dust the cake with cocoa (or confectioners' sugar) and serve with the whipped cream mixture.



STAFF PICKS
Real Simple staffers voted, too! Find our favorite recipes at realsimple.com/favoriterecipes.



BEST CAKE
FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE CAKE
NOVEMBER 2010





Back in 2000, *Real Simple* debuted with a mission to do less, have more. Consider this story a tribute to that idea: 15 smart items that add up to a world of looks for work and life (with closet room to spare).



15 PIECES + 6 ACCESSORIES

1 PRINTED BLOUSE By Malene Birger, \$445, Etoile, 561-392-2449. **2 DRESS** Max Mara, \$525, 212-753-4000. **3 SWEATER** Gap, \$50, gap.com. **4 VEST** Elizabeth and James, \$475, Coop & Spree, 917-475-1723. **5 PEPLUM TOP** Orla Kiely, \$288, orlakiely.com. **6 METALLIC COAT** Augden, \$545, shopkikionline.com. **7 CUFF** Sequin, \$120, sequin-nyc.com. **8 SILK DRESS** Magaschoni, \$378, magaschoni.com. **9 BLUSH TRENCH** Joie, \$648, joie.com. **10 PANTS** The Limited Collection Inspired by *Scandal*, \$98, thelimited.com. **11 WIDE-LEG PANTS** Joe Fresh, \$59, joefresh.com. **12 PENCIL SKIRT** Ann Taylor, \$79, annataylor.com.

Photographs by Jens Mortensen



STYLING TIP
A pared-down wardrobe that works in infinite ways doesn't mean wearing only matchy neutrals. Unexpected pops of color and pattern make outfits look fresh and varied.

13 BELT L.K.Bennett, \$125, lkbennett.com. **14 FLATS** Seychelles, \$90, seychellesfootwear.com. **15 LACE TOP** Rebecca Taylor, \$275, rebeccataylor.com. **16 FULL SKIRT** Boden, \$148, bodenusa.com. **17 HEELS** Carrie by SJP, \$355, nordstrom.com. **18 PRINTED TOP** Zara, \$50, zara.com. **19 NECKLACE** Chloe + Isabel, \$48, chloeandisabel.com. **20 HANDBAG** Gap, \$120, gap.com. **21 BLAZER** Krisa, \$436, krisastyle.com.
HAIR BY PAUL WARREN USING RENE FURTERER AT ART DEPT; MAKEUP BY GEORGINA BILLINGTON USING CHANEL LES BEIGES POWDER FOR JUDY CASEY; SOFT STYLING BY DEULON LESURE FOR MARK EDWARD.

ALPHA KAPPA
ALPHA
WILLINGBORO,
NEW JERSEY

THE CHRIST
UNITED
METHODIST QUILT
GROUP
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS

Let's Get TOGETHER and Feel All Right

"THE SMART
LADIES"
PADUCAH,
KENTUCKY

Have we replaced real friendships and civic participation with Facebook likes and hashtag activism? And are we too far gone to fix it? Here's the expert take on why [face-to-face connections](#) are so crucial (particularly now)—and some inspiration to make more of your own.

LATE IN 2013, Sarah Grey, 34, was going stir-crazy as a work-from-home writer and mom in Philadelphia. "We were just collapsing onto the couch at the end of every day to watch TV," she recalls. "We never saw friends and barely even talked to our neighbors." So Grey took to Facebook with a post that has since gone viral: "Starting next Friday, we're cooking up a pot of spaghetti and meatballs every Friday night and sitting down at the dining room table as a family—along with anyone else who'd like to join us. Friends, neighbors, relatives, clients, Facebook friends who'd like to hang out in real life, travelers passing through: you are welcome at

our table," she wrote. "You can bring something, but you don't have to. The house will be messy.... This is our little attempt to spend more time with our village."

After the first few dinners, Grey and her husband, Joe, had to start capping the guest list at 10 adults, plus a handful of kids, because they were out of chairs. Now the idea has gone global, and on her site, [FridayNightMeatballs.com](#), Grey is inundated with stories of folks following suit or putting their own twist on the plan (Tuesday Tacos, Brisket Brunches). She's heard from dinner tables as far-flung as Malaysia. "I've realized that all over the world, people are working more, eating con-





WOMEN WHO QUILT

The Christ United Methodist Quilt Group of Rockford, Illinois, has been meeting weekly from January to October for the past 20 years. They use donated fabrics to make quilts that go mostly to families getting back on their feet. "We take turns bringing treats and gather around the table for a coffee break," explains Donna Copeland (center, in white). "That's when we share news, ideas, finished quilts, or projects that we may have made at home." The 19 members range in age from the 50s to the 90s (including one mother-daughter pair) and in skill level from novice to pro. Sewing is a shared passion, sure, says Copeland, "but I think that we mostly like the fellowship."

venience foods, doing what they have to do to get by—and losing connection with one another in the process,” says Grey says.

Large-scale research studies by social scientists back up Grey’s speculation. The last quarter of the 20th century saw a drop of a third in the number of people who regularly invite friends over and a 58 percent drop in the number who join community clubs and civic organizations (and actually attend the meetings), according to research by Robert Putnam, Ph.D., the author of the now iconic *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. In the 1960s, half of Americans said they trusted other people, even strangers; fewer than a third say so today. And a survey published in 2006 by University of Arizona and Duke University researchers drawing on 20 years of data found—hold on to your hat—that 25 percent of us lack a single close confidant (defined as someone with whom you can discuss “important matters”), while 50 percent of us are just one friend away from social isolation. “And social isolation is a strong predictor of premature death,” says Thomas Sander, the executive director of the Saguaro Seminar: Civic Engagement in America, a program of the Harvard Kennedy School, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. So we’re lonely and less involved, and it might be killing us. Lovely.

WHAT HAPPENED TO COMMUNITY?

“Members of ‘the Greatest Generation’ [adults during World War II] were much more civic-minded than their children and grandchildren

“We’ve lost many of our ‘third places’—the Main Streets, coffee shops, post offices, and pubs that served as central meeting spots in a community. Without those places, we don’t get to know the people around us.”

—SOCIOLOGIST RAY OLDENBURG

seem to be: They voted more, joined more, gave more, trusted more,” says Sander. Since that time, families have become increasingly scattered. More than 60 percent of Americans move away from their hometowns, and 43 percent leave their home states, according to data collected by the Pew Research Center. We spend more time than ever in our cars, and we’ve lost many of what sociologist Ray Oldenburg calls our “third places”: the Main Streets, coffee shops, post offices, and pubs that served as central meeting spots in a community but that no longer exist in many suburbs. “Without these third places, we don’t get to know the people around us,” says Oldenburg. “We have no ‘place on the corner’ that can serve as an easy escape. And life without community means a lifestyle of the home-to-work-and-back-again shuttle.”

WHY CONNECTING MATTERS

Socializing is good for our health, both physical and mental. When we have strong connections, we’re more likely to respond to stressful situations by joining together for comfort and protection. This is especially true for women. Psychologists call it the “tend and befriend” theory, and neuroscience research has shown that it wreaks far less havoc on the nervous system than the more primitive fight-or-flight response. “Other species have thick skin, sharp teeth, quick reflexes, or camouflage to protect themselves,” writes Shelley Taylor, the social psychologist at UCLA who pioneered the theory. Human beings adopted group living as their primary solution to the problem of survival.

And on a physical level? Having a strong network of in-person connections can reduce your mortality risk as much as quitting smoking or booze. And it may have a bigger impact on your health than your weight or activity level does, according to a 2010 review of 148 studies published in the journal *PLOS Medicine*. Breast cancer patients who participate in support groups report less pain than do those who don’t. And one group of patients with a particularly aggressive strain even lived longer, according to research out of Stanford University.





SORORITY SISTERS FOREVER

Alpha Kappa Alpha is the oldest Greek-letter sorority founded by African-American women. The Pi Mu Omega chapter, in Willingboro, New Jersey, convenes monthly to talk, connect, and plan or run community-service projects. "It's a way to build a family outside your family," says Kelly Moore (center, in AKA shirt), vice president of the chapter. The group, 54 women in all, from recent grads to retirees, gets together to stock food pantries, host movie nights for Head Start families, and run support groups for cancer survivors. "The thing I love about AKA," says Moore, "is its legacy of women—the sisterhood and the service."

FACE TIME VS. "FACETIME"

In the past 15 years, social media has redefined and reconstructed how we think of community. But sociologists, pundits, and experts who study community building have yet to agree whether it's a force for good or evil, and many are concerned. "I would insist that real community is local [and in person]," says Oldenburg. "Most of what we communicate is nonverbal. There's a wealth of literature on this. You can't fully understand

people if you're never face-to-face."

So what happens now that most of our group living happens online? Says Peter Block, a coauthor of *Abundant Community: Awakening the Power of Families and Neighborhoods*: "Facebook can't substitute for the safety and security that comes from living in a community where your neighbors know your kids' names." And it also can't reinforce the lessons we teach our children about the real world. "Children need hands-on learning experi-

THE NON-BOOK CLUB

In keeping with its tongue-in-cheek name, “The Smart Ladies,” this reading group in Paducah, Kentucky, made a smart adjustment. “We were having too many meetings where people hadn’t read the book,” says Sarah Stewart Holland (second from far right). So the women switched to long-form magazine pieces instead. Among recent picks was a *New Yorker* article called “Why We Need Answers.” “This group started as a fun way to connect with people, but it’s become so much more,” says Holland. “We share our deepest hopes and fears. I’m not sure any of us were expecting that level of connection.”



ences to understand certain things. For example, how to treat animals, how to garden, or how to interact with the elderly,” says Block. “That has to happen where we live.”

The Internet has clearly played a major role in the loss of third places. We can Amazon Prime just about anything that used to require a trip to the bookstore, hardware store, or pharmacy. This has also contributed to a loss of “interdependence” within communities, says Douglas Rushkoff, Ph.D., the author of *Present Shock: When Everything Happens Now*, and a professor of media theory and digital economics at Queens College, City University of New York. Back in the day, “communities weren’t just circles of friends choosing to be together; they were people who knew each other as friends, customers, and interdepen-

dent suppliers. So Joe sold oats to John, and John made the wheels for Joe’s wagon.” Now, Rushkoff argues, we relate to the big corporations that have replaced those merchants and craftspeople more than we do to individuals.

And online communities can seem to deaden civic participation: We sign online petitions but don’t always show up at the voting booth; we show our outrage over gun violence through tweets instead of real-world protests. “There’s a lot of laptop activism going on now,” says Rushkoff. “It’s better to click on something than to do nothing at all, but it’s a poor substitute for what we might have done [in the past].”

Even digital-community mavens have their doubts about the Internet’s ability to meet all our community needs. Laurel Touby, the founder of

mediabistro.com, a news and networking site for media professionals, believes social media offers, at best, “a kind of half measure” when it comes to community. “It’s just too easy to bow out at any point,” she says. “You don’t have to commit the time to physically showing up. You don’t even have to use words. And that lets people check out.” She points to a recent trend of e-mailing wedding invitations (and the companion trend of guests not bothering to reply) as proof that things have gone too far. “This level of nonparticipation is now acceptable at our most sacred, special rituals,” she says. “This is not OK.”

COME TOGETHER...RIGHT NOW

And yet—perhaps we can find some hope in the modern community model of Friday Night Meatballs. “There’s no longer a distinction between online and what we used to call ‘real life,’” says Grey. “What happens online is a part of real life.” She uses social media to invite guests to her dinners (Touby will be relieved to know that a shared Google spreadsheet tracks RSVPs) and to learn about meals inspired by her idea happening elsewhere. “A ritual like this is such a simple, elegant solution to the community problem, and technology makes it possible,” says author Jenny Rosenstrach, who champions family dinners and other community-based customs on her blog, *DinnerALoveStory.com*. When her kids were younger, Rosenstrach organized an end-of-school-year “bus-stop social” in her suburban New York neighborhood for the families who waited together each morning; another friend invited the whole block over for dinner on snow days. “We coordinated all of that online,” says Rosenstrach. Like Grey and so many other mothers today, she

“This is about deciding that you deserve to have fun and be a part of a community no matter what your house looks like.”

—SARAH GREY, ORIGINATOR OF FRIDAY NIGHT MEATBALLS

Gathering memories

Real Simple has been celebrating community from the git-go. A few highlights from our first 15 years.

ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT (2001)

A dozen women (teachers, librarians) in Syracuse, New York, united by their love of crew form a competitive team.

SATURDAY NIGHT SALSA (2007)

Four young Chicago women fall in love with salsa dancing and convene every weekend to enjoy it together—finishing up with breakfast downtown in the wee hours.

MYSTERY TRIP (2009)

A gang of Williams College grads travels together annually for a long weekend. One person picks the destination and does all the planning, so the trip is a surprise for the rest of the group.

A GAGGLE OF GARDENERS (2010)

Half-a-dozen friends in upstate New York cycle through each other’s flower beds, tending and weeding. It all started with a knee injury, but it winds up becoming an open-air social club.

FUN RUNS (2012)

A kickboxing instructor in Midlothian, Texas, sends her class outside to run a mile. Soon the pack of strangers, ages 24 to 52, form friendships and begin running regularly. Some train for—and conquer—a marathon together.

—Kaitlyn Pirie

balances community involvement with work. Which is part of what has changed—and why it can be a little bit dangerous to wax nostalgic for neighborhoods where everyone knows your name and will lend you a cup of sugar: Those environments depended upon families being able to afford to have one spouse at home all day long, getting to know the neighbors.

“I don’t want to go back to the ‘good old days,’ when women did all the cooking, cleaning, and child care,” emphasizes Grey. So while the menu reflects her Italian-American husband’s nostalgia for the Sunday suppers of his childhood, the context is all new: Joe does the cooking while Sarah commits exactly one hour (“not a minute longer”) to tidying up before guests arrive. “We had to find a way to get that spirit of togetherness to work with the reality of our lives,” she says. “Housework is a pretty low priority for me, which is probably pretty obvious to anyone who comes to dinner. But this is about deciding that you deserve to have fun and be a part of a community no matter what your house looks like.” An insight that flies (refreshingly and delightfully) in the face of the image-oriented communities that technology has birthed, featuring photos of perfect homes and perfect children and perfect vacation moments.

So perhaps the Internet can serve as a kind of “fourth place”—one we visit for information, inspiration, and even logistical help, in order to make our physical communities stronger. Sander, for one, is optimistic that in the coming years we may see a more engaged world. “If we succeed, it will be because we harness the power of technology to enhance face-to-face get-togethers,” he says, pointing to companies, like Nextdoor and Meetup, already focusing their energies there. The emerging sharing economy created by sites like Airbnb, TaskRabbit, and Instacart may also help us rebuild that trust and belief in the kindness of strangers.

And how can we help ourselves? “We can easily restore the social capital we’ve lost in the last generation or two if we all prioritize getting together with friends and getting involved in issues we care about when deciding how to spend our weekends.”

Sounds like an idea we should keep talking about—perhaps over meatballs. ■



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*Per 3.5 oz portion. Contains 200mg of ALA per 56g serving, which is 15% of the daily value for ALA (1.3g).

Things Cooks Know Blowout

From our (test) kitchen to yours, 20 greatest hits.



Checking a thermometer for accuracy

There's only one sure way to know if meat is done: Take its temperature in the thickest part of the cut. But if your instant-read thermometer is off, you're cooked. Check its precision in a glass of water mixed with enough crushed ice to be slushy. (Be sure the tip isn't touching the sides or the bottom of the glass.) The dial should read 32° F after about 30 seconds. If it doesn't, the thermometer needs to be recalibrated. Here are two easy methods.

FOR A DIGITAL THERMOMETER

For models that you can recalibrate, submerge the thermometer probe into the ice water and hold down the Reset (or Calibrate) button (if it has one) or the On-Off button for 6 to 8 seconds, until the display reads 32° F.

FOR A DIAL THERMOMETER

Submerge the thermometer probe into the ice water and, using pliers or a wrench, turn the nut just under the dial until the dial points to 32° F.

Illustrations by
Melinda Josie

How to sear meat like a pro

You know that irresistibly crisp crust that comes on a steak or a pork chop on TV? You can get equally impressive results at home. Here's how.

STEP 1: Take the meat out of the refrigerator 30 minutes before cooking so it can come to room temperature. Pat it dry with a paper towel.

STEP 2: Get your skillet (*not* nonstick) good and hot—a drop of water should sizzle on the surface. Add a splash of oil. Season the meat just before adding it to the pan. (Salt will pull juices from the meat if sprinkled on too early.)

STEP 3: Cook the meat and wait until it releases easily from the pan before turning it. (It will release once a nice crust has formed.) Don't tug. If there's any resistance, let it cook for an additional minute before checking again.



CUTTING ROLY-POLY VEGETABLES SAFELY

To keep your fingers intact, use this technique on wobbly vegetables, like potatoes and beets.

STEP 1: With a sharp knife, cut a thin slice along the length of the potato (or other vegetable) to create a flat side.

STEP 2: Turn the potato cut-side down on the cutting board. Slice, stopping when the end of the potato becomes unsteady and difficult to grip.

STEP 3: Turn the potato so that the broad, flat side from which you made the last cut is face-down on the board. Continue to slice.

Things Cooks Know Blowout

HOW TO PIT AN AVOCADO

It's as easy as a firm whack and a twist of the wrist.



STEP 1: Using a sturdy knife, slice into the avocado lengthwise on one side. With the blade resting on the pit, rotate the knife around the avocado to create 2 halves. Twist the halves to separate them.



STEP 2: Rest the avocado half containing the pit on a folded kitchen towel. Give the pit a whack with the knife, aiming straight into its center. Holding the avocado half in the towel, rotate the knife to loosen the pit. Lift the pit off while it's still wedged on the blade. Knock the pit on the edge of the sink to dislodge it.



STEP 3: Use the tip of the knife to slice or dice the avocado flesh within the skin. Scoop out with a large spoon.

Reviving wilted produce

As vegetables lose moisture, their cell walls start to sag. That's why they go limp. To get them firm and crunchy again: Fill a large bowl with cold water and ice, add the vegetables, and let them soak for 15 to 20 minutes. Dry thoroughly before using. This method works with everything from fresh herbs and lettuce to carrots and radishes. (Slice first for maximum water absorption.)

The easiest way to segment an orange



Don't let the pith leave you bitter about using citrus in salads and desserts. Get clean, juicy segments with these easy steps.

STEP 1: With a sharp chef's knife or serrated knife, cut a slice off the top and bottom of the orange. Stand it upright on one of the cut ends.

STEP 2: Working from top to bottom and following the curve of the orange, remove strips of the peel, including the white pith, to reveal the orange flesh.

STEP 3: Working over a bowl, hold the orange in one hand. Make a cut on both sides of each segment along the membrane. Release the segment into the bowl and repeat, making your way around the fruit.

GETTING SOFT- AND HARD-BOILED EGGS JUST RIGHT

Trying to determine when a yolk is slightly runny, or firm but still creamy, can make any cook crack. Read on for an easy how-to.

Don't start the eggs in cold water; otherwise it's tricky to know when to start timing. A few bubbles? Full-on boil? Instead, lower the eggs into gently simmering water. Then start the clock right away. (It takes only a minute to miss the mark). The deviled egg is definitely in the details, so use this chart to get your favorite every time.



3 MINUTES
This is the ultimate soft-boiled egg: a warm, runny yolk with a just-set white. Slice open (a butter knife works) and eat right out of the shell with skinny toast sticks (which the Brits call soldiers) for dipping.



6 MINUTES
The yolk is starting to set at the edges, and the white is firm. The shell is peelable, but the yolk still oozes when sliced.



9 MINUTES
The yolk is set but still creamy and slightly runny in the very center. Best for adding a protein boost to green salads or for hollowing out to make deviled eggs.



11 MINUTES
The yolk is uniformly set and light yellow. This is the hard-boiled egg that you need for chopping into an egg or potato salad. Also makes a sturdy on-the-go snack.



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McCormick Orange Glazed Ham

- 1 bone-in spiral-cut ham (about 10 lbs.)
- 1 cup orange marmalade
- 1/4 tsp. **McCormick Ground Cloves**
- 1 tsp. **McCormick Ground Mustard**
- 1/2 tsp. **McCormick Garlic Powder**
- 1/4 tsp. **McCormick Ground Black Pepper**

Tip: No cloves? Use 1 tsp. **McCormick Ground Cinnamon** instead.

PLACE the ham on its side in roasting pan. Mix marmalade and spices in small bowl until well blended. Brush 1/2 of the marmalade mixture over ham, gently separating the slices so mixture can reach middle of ham. Cover loosely with foil.

BAKE in preheated 325°F oven 1 hour, basting occasionally. Remove foil. Brush with remaining marmalade mixture. Bake 45 minutes longer. Serve ham with pan drippings.

Makes 24 servings.



For more great-tasting recipes, visit mccormick.com

KITCHEN SKILLS

Things Cooks Know Blowout

Slicing brownies and bars

If you want neat squares or rectangles, a spatula won't cut it. Do this instead.

STEP 1: Before baking, coat the bottom and sides of the baking pan with softened butter.

STEP 2: Line the pan with a strip of parchment, leaving an overhang on 2 sides; press down so it sticks. Brush with more butter and line with a second strip of parchment, perpendicular to the first (also with an overhang).

STEP 3: Add the batter to the pan. Bake and let cool as directed. Then, gripping the paper overhangs, lift the brownies or bars out of the pan and transfer to a cutting board.

STEP 4: Using a large serrated knife, cut into squares or rectangles, as desired, then lift off the parchment.



MASTERING WHIPPED CREAM

Getting soft peaks—and not going too far (oops, butter!)—is easy if you use these three tips.

START WITH THE RIGHT INGREDIENTS.

For fluffy, stable whipped cream, use cartons labeled “heavy cream,” “whipping cream,” or “heavy whipping cream.” (Save the light cream for coffee.) For sweetness, add 2 tablespoons granulated sugar per cup of cream before beating.

WATCH CAREFULLY.

In a chilled bowl, with an electric mixer on high, beat the chilled cream and sugar until the beaters leave visible lines when drawn across the cream. Reduce mixer speed to medium-low and continue to beat until soft peaks form. (When you hold up the beaters, the cream should stand up, then flop over.)

IF YOU DO OVERWHIP, DON'T PANIC.

Add a splash of fresh, unwhipped cream to the curdled lumps and fold it in with a rubber spatula. Repeat as needed until the mixture smooths out.

Gimme some skin: how to create and use 3 types of zest

The aromatic oils in the skins of citrus fruits are the secret ingredient in countless dishes, from pastas to cakes. Zest adds bold flavor without the extra acidity found in the juice. The key is removing the outer skin while leaving behind the bitter white pith. Depending on the type of zest you need, one of these tools will do the trick.



Y-PEELER: Use a vegetable peeler to create long, 1-inch-wide strips; cut away any white pith. Toss the peels into braises or martinis—anywhere you want flavor but not a mouthful of grated citrus.



ZESTER: This tool makes narrow, curly strips that add an assertive bite to pastas and sauces or that can be used as a garnish. (You can also create julienne strips by thinly slicing a larger piece of peel.)



MICROPLANE: You'll get fine shavings, with little chance of unwanted pith, that disappear into dressings, cookies, cakes, and pie fillings.

MEASUREMENT CHEAT SHEET

Next time you need to triple a recipe for a big bash, use this handy list of equivalents. You'll never have to measure out 12 teaspoons (and—dang!—lose count) again.

1 tablespoon	=	3 teaspoons	=	½ fluid ounce
¼ cup	=	4 tablespoons	=	2 fluid ounces
⅓ cup	=	5 tablespoons + 1 teaspoon	=	3 fluid ounces
½ cup	=	8 tablespoons	=	4 fluid ounces
1 cup	=	16 tablespoons	=	8 fluid ounces

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KITCHEN SKILLS

Things Cooks Know Blowout



Holding a cutting board in place

A board that slides around the counter while you're chopping is an accident waiting to happen. Keep yours anchored with a cut-to-fit piece of rug pad or shelf liner. (The added cushioning also helps stabilize a slightly warped board.) Wash in the top rack of the dishwasher as necessary.

MAKING YOUR OWN CHICKEN CUTLETS

Trim your food budget by turning boneless, skinless chicken breasts into cutlets. It's quick and easy, and it can save you up to \$2 a pound.

STEP 1: Place a boneless, skinless chicken breast on a cutting board. Hold it flat with the palm of one hand and, with a chef's knife or long boning knife in the other hand, carefully slice it in half horizontally (parallel to the cutting board).

STEP 2: Open the breast like a book and, if necessary, make a cut to separate the 2 halves. Trim any ragged edges.

STEP 3: Place one hand over the other. Use the heel of the bottom hand to press down and flatten each piece to a $\frac{3}{8}$ - to $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thickness. Voilà! Neat, quick-cooking cutlets worthy of your best chicken Parm.

You go, grill! The ultimate multitasker

It can do much more than churn out burgers. To cook an entire meal—say, steak, vegetables, and bread—all at the same time, divide the grill into three zones: a direct, high-heat area for searing and fast grilling; an indirect, medium-heat area for big pieces and long-cooking items; and a low-heat safe zone, where you can toast bread and move food to if there's a flare-up. It's simple enough with a gas grill's nuanced settings, but it's just as easy with a charcoal one. Follow these five steps.

STEP 1
Light the coals and let them burn for at least 10 minutes. They're ready when glowing and covered with light gray ash.

STEP 2
Spread two-thirds of the lit coals in a double layer over a third of the bottom grill grate. This is your hot zone, for direct-heat grilling.

STEP 3
Spread the remaining coals in a single layer over the center third of the grill grate. This is your medium-heat zone, for indirect grilling.

STEP 4
Leave a third of the grill grate coal-free. This is the safe zone, where you can move juicy burgers and skin-on chicken pieces that are flaring or foods that need to be kept warm.

STEP 5
Attach the top grate and get grilling.





Another Vitamix Aha: hiding veggies in breakfast.

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KITCHEN SKILLS

Things Cooks Know Blowout

How to chop garlic

With these three actions, you can prep a clove in no time.

TRIM: Use the tip of a chef's knife to slice off the hard root of each clove.

CRUSH: Place a clove under the flat side of the knife, with the blade facing away from you. Press the heel of your palm or your fist down on the knife until you feel the clove give way. Discard the skin.



CHOP: Gather together the peeled cloves, hold your knife by the handle, and place your other, nondominant hand on top of the blade. Rock the knife up and down through the cloves. (The tip stays on the cutting board.) Chop until the garlic is the size you desire.



MASTER CLASS: SCRAMBLED EGGS

For foolproof, fluffy eggs, you need to be patient—and follow this step-by-step method.

STEP 1: Whisk the eggs (2 per person) in a large bowl to break up the yolks.

STEP 2: Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a nonstick pan over medium-low heat. Add the eggs and cook (don't touch!) until

just set around the edges, about 1 minute. Push the eggs toward the center of the pan with a heat-safe rubber spatula. Tilt the pan so any uncooked egg flows back across the pan's bottom.

STEP 3: Keep pushing the eggs across the pan until still slightly runny. (They will continue to cook off the heat.) Transfer to a plate. Season with salt and pepper.

Why quarter-sheet pans are kitchen VIPs

Measuring a trim 9 by 13 inches, quarter-sheet pans—sometimes called small jelly-roll pans—are handy for roasting foods with different cooking times. (Two sheets fit side by side in an oven.) Here's what else they can do.

CORRALLING RECIPE INGREDIENTS Gather meat, vegetables, and other perishables the recipe calls for on a quarter-sheet pan in the refrigerator in advance to make for quicker cooking later.

CATCHING DRIPS IN THE OVEN To hold the oozy overflow of baked pastas and pies, place them on a quarter-sheet pan. **Bonus:** This leaves space on the oven rack for the rest of the meal.

MAKING DEEP-DISH PIZZA Lightly oil the interior of a quarter-sheet pan, press the dough into the bottom and up the sides, then pile on your favorite toppings for a Chicago-style pie.

FREEZING COOKIE DOUGH The pan's slender size makes it ideal for freezing drop-cookie dough (or berries). Slide the pan directly on top of the ice cream cartons (no need to reorganize the freezer to make room). Transfer the items to a container once they are firm.

Sausage CHICKEN ALFREDO

15 minutes

COOK TIME: ~~1 HOUR~~

~~1 pkg. Hillshire Farm® Smoked Sausage~~
~~3 chicken breast halves, cubed~~
~~2 tbsps. butter, divided~~
~~2 cloves garlic, minced, divided~~
~~2 tbsps. chopped flat-leaf parsley~~
~~1 1/2 tps. Italian seasoning~~
~~1/2 onion, diced~~
~~1 1/2 tps. salt~~
~~1/2 tsp. ground white pepper~~
 8 oz. pasta, cooked, drained
 2 cups heavy cream
 2 tsp. Cajun seasoning
 1/2 cup grated Parmesan



1. Prepare pasta according to package directions; drain and set aside.

Sauté sausage for 5 minutes.

~~2. Cook chicken in butter, season with salt, white pepper and Italian seasoning in a large skillet over medium-high heat until chicken is no longer pink. Stir in onion and parsley, cook until onions are transparent.~~

3. Add ~~garlic cloves~~, cream and Cajun seasoning and boil. Reduce heat; simmer 3–4 mins. or until mixture begins to thicken. Stir in Parmesan. Add pasta and toss.



Great additions are peas, tomatoes or any of your favorite vegetables. Just stir them in and simmer.





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HERE, YOU'LL NEED THIS

Complete food-storage guide



Real Simple consulted the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), food scientists, food manufacturers, and a host of other experts—including fishmongers, cheese sellers, coffee roasters, bakers, and bartenders—to establish these storage guidelines. The first consideration was safety. But because you want your food to be delicious, too, for some products, *Real Simple* chose the conservative storage time for optimum freshness.

● REFRIGERATOR ● FREEZER ● COUNTERTOP ● PANTRY

FOOD

BEEF AND LAMB		DELI AND PROCESSED MEATS		HOW TO STORE MEAT AND POULTRY	POULTRY (CHICKEN AND TURKEY)
CHOPS ● 3 days ● 6 months	Wrap unused sausages in butcher paper or wax paper, then plastic bags, and use within a day of opening the original packaging.	COLD CUTS, DELI SLICED ● 5 days ● 2 months	SAUSAGE, CURED (SUCH AS PEPPERONI AND SOPPRESSATA) ● 3 months (unopened); 6 weeks (open) ● Do not freeze.		
GROUND MEAT AND PREMADE PATTIES ● 2 days ● 4 months		COLD CUTS, PACKAGED ● 2 weeks (unopened); 5 days (open) ● 2 months	PORK	Keep meat and poultry in its original packaging in the refrigerator. To freeze, slip the packaging into a resealable plastic freezer bag. If you're freezing for several months, it's best to wrap pieces individually in plastic before bagging; this will make them less vulnerable to freezer burn. Another way to cut the risk of freezer burn is to buy vacuum-packed meats and poultry (which can also last about 2 days longer in the refrigerator).	HAM, COOKED ● 1 week (whole); 4 days (half); 4 days (steaks) ● 2 months
ROASTS AND LOINS ● 3 days ● 6 months		HOT DOGS ● 2 weeks (unopened); 1 week (open) ● 2 months	BACON ● 2 weeks (unopened); 1 week (open) ● 1 month		HAM, COUNTRY ● 3 months ● 1 month
SAUSAGE, UNCOOKED ● 2 days ● 2 months		SAUSAGE, COOKED (SUCH AS KIELBASA AND ANDOUILLE) ● 2 weeks (unopened); 1 week (open) ● 2 months	CHOPS ● 3 days ● 6 months		GROUND MEAT AND PREMADE PATTIES ● 2 days ● 4 months
STEAKS ● 3 days ● 6 months		GROUND MEAT AND PREMADE PATTIES ● 2 days ● 4 months			PIECES ● 2 days ● 6 months
STEW MEAT ● 2 days ● 4 months					SAUSAGE, UNCOOKED ● 2 days ● 2 months
					SAUSAGE, UNCOOKED ● 2 days ● 2 months
					STEW MEAT ● 2 days ● 4 months
					WHOLE ● 2 days ● 6 months

Written by
Elizabeth Passarella
Illustrations by
Eight Hour Day

After using part of a ham, rewrap in butcher paper or wax paper, then tuck into a sealed plastic bag and place in the coldest part of the refrigerator for up to 2 days.

Complete food-storage guide (cont.)

FOOD

SEAFOOD		HOW TO STORE		
CLAMS ● 2 days (live in shell); 1 day (shucked) ● 3 months (shucked); cook after thawing.	MUSSELS ● 2 days (live in shell); 1 day (shucked) ● 4 months (shucked); cook after thawing.	HOW TO STORE These items should be kept in the refrigerator, though cheeses benefit from a little extra TLC. Place soft ones, like Brie and mozzarella, in an airtight container once open. Wrap semihard and hard cheeses, once open, in wax or parchment paper, then stow in a resealable plastic bag. (If you're freezing, replace the paper with plastic wrap.) Good news for those who like to stock up on milk and yogurt when they're on sale: Both can be frozen. Just transfer them into freezer containers or freezer-proof glass jars, leaving 1 inch of space at the top to allow for expansion; once thawed, mix to redistribute the solids.		
CRABMEAT, PACKAGED ● 1 month (unopened); 5 days (open) ● 3 months	OYSTERS ● 2 days (live in shell); 1 day (shucked) ● 4 months (shucked); cook after thawing.			BUTTER SPREADS AND DAIRY SPREADS ● 3 months ● Do not freeze.
CRABS, LIVE WHOLE ● 1 day ● Do not freeze.	SCALLOPS ● 2 days ● 3 months; cook after thawing.			BUTTER, STICKS ● 3 months ● 6 months
FISH (FATTY), FRESH (SUCH AS SALMON AND MACKEREL) ● 2 days ● Do not freeze.	SHRIMP, COOKED ● 3 days ● 3 months			BUTTERMILK ● 2 weeks ● Do not freeze.
FISH (LEAN), FRESH (SUCH AS TILAPIA, FLOUNDER, AND COD) ● 2 days ● 6 months	SHRIMP, FRESH OR THAWED ● 2 days ● 6 months			CHEESES, HARD (SUCH AS PARMESAN AND PECORINO)
FISH, FROZEN ● 2 days (thawed) ● 6 months	SHRIMP, FROZEN ● 2 days (thawed) ● 6 months			BLOCK ● 4 months ● 6 months
LOBSTERS, LIVE WHOLE ● 2 days ● Do not freeze.	FATTY FISH NOTE: Fatty fish can turn mushy when frozen at home and thawed. If you want to stock some in the freezer, buy already frozen.		GRATED ● 1 month ● 4 months	
LOBSTER TAILS, FROZEN ● 2 days (thawed) ● 6 months	SEAFOOD		CHEESES, SEMI-HARD (SUCH AS CHEDDAR, GOUDA, AND SWISS)	
Leave seafood in its original packaging and, if possible, place it on a bowl of ice in the refrigerator. However, live shellfish (like clams) should not be put on ice; open or poke holes in the packaging. To freeze seafood, slip the original packaging into a resealable freezer bag.		Block, Packaged ● 6 months (unopened); 1 month (open) ● 6 months		
		SLICES, DELI ● 1 week ● Do not freeze.		
		SLICES, PACKAGED ● 1 month (unopened); 1 week (open) ● Do not freeze.		
		CHEESES, SOFT (SUCH AS GOAT CHEESE AND BRIE) ● 2 weeks (unopened); 1 week (open) ● Do not freeze.		
		COTTAGE CHEESE ● 1 week ● Do not freeze.		
		CREAM ● 10 days (light cream); 1 month (heavy and whipping cream) ● Do not freeze.		
		CREAM CHEESE ● 2 months (unopened); 2 weeks (open) ● Do not freeze.		
		EGG SUBSTITUTE ● 10 days (unopened); 3 days (open) ● Do not freeze.		
		EGGS, UNSHELLED ● 5 weeks ● Do not freeze whole eggs; egg whites will keep for up to 6 months.		
		HALF-AND-HALF ● 4 days ● Do not freeze.		
		MILK ● 1 week ● 3 months		
		RICOTTA ● 5 days ● Do not freeze.		
		SOUR CREAM ● 3 weeks ● Do not freeze.		
		SOY AND NUT MILKS ● 1 week (open) ● Do not freeze.		
		TOFU ● 3 weeks (unopened); 1 week (open; keep covered in water) ● 5 months		
		WHIPPED CREAM, CAN ● 1 month ● Do not freeze.		
		WHIPPED TOPPING, NONDAIRY ● 3 months (can); 2 weeks (tub) ● 6 months (tub)		
		YOGURT ● 2 weeks ● 2 months		

Fatty fish can turn mushy when frozen at home and thawed. If you want to stock some in the freezer, buy already frozen.

Fresh mozzarella will keep for about 3 days (do not freeze). For shredded mozzarella, follow the rules for semisoft cheeses.

Some organic milk is ultra-pasteurized (heated at a higher temperature to kill more bacteria), which gives it a longer shelf life.

Freezing makes tofu dense and chewy, but it will still be fine for cooking.



THOSE MYSTERIOUS DATE STAMPS

There's no standardized system for food dating in this country, which means stamps on packaged foods can be baffling. Approximately 20 states require dates on some perishable foods, such as meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy. But depending on where you live, you may see "best if used by," "sell by," or nothing at all. (The one exception: infant formulas. Federal law requires an expiration date because it loses nutritional value over time.)

So what do the different labels mean? The most important are "use by" and "sell by," which are often included by the manufacturer to help consumers get top quality. An item will be freshest and tastiest if consumed by that date, but it will probably still be safe a few days after (stay within the guidelines listed here). A "sell by" date is meant for the store; it tells a retailer when to pull an item from the shelves. When you buy packaged food, check to make sure the sell-by date hasn't passed and eat it within the time range recommended in this guide.



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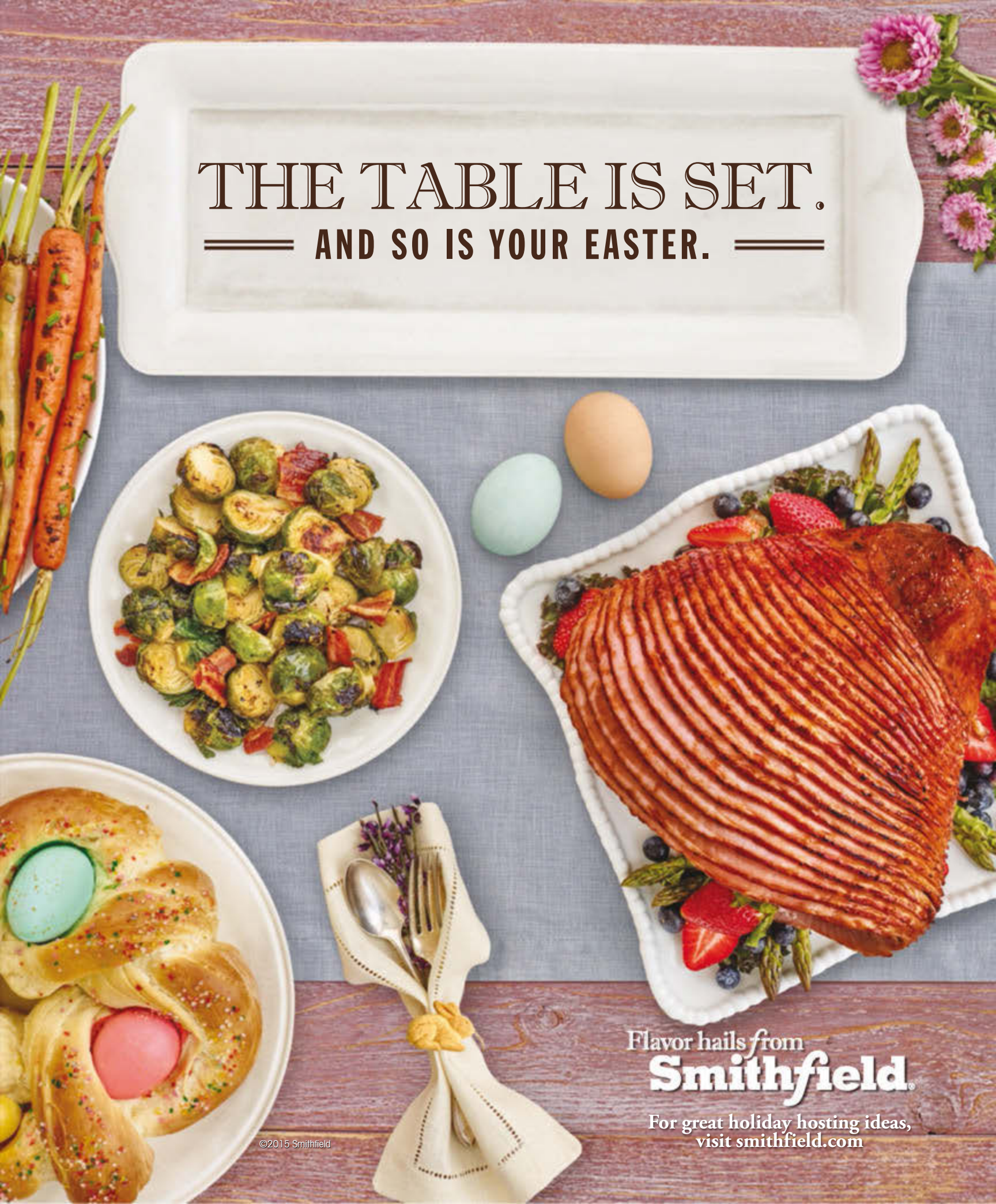
Wrap leafy herbs in a just-damp paper towel and then loosely in a plastic bag to keep fresh.

To ripen, keep them at room temperature in a paper bag until soft. Eat immediately or refrigerate to get a few more days.

Discard damaged and moldy berries before storing to prevent the spread of mold.

Leave refrigerated produce unwashed in its original packaging or wrapped loosely in a plastic bag. (Exceptions, such as mushrooms and herbs, are noted here.) If your greens seem particularly dirty (think lettuce from the farmers' market), wash, drain, and dry them well, then wrap them in a paper towel before placing in a plastic bag. Fruits and vegetables stored at room temperature should be removed from any packaging and left loose. These guidelines assume that produce is ripe and ready to eat. Some items, like peaches and avocados, will ripen faster in a paper bag on the countertop, which traps ethylene gas from the produce and acts as a maturing agent.

ZUCCHINI
● 5 days



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TO BUY: \$25, amazon.com.

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TO BUY: \$4 at supermarkets.

BEST PEANUT BUTTER

Santa Cruz Organic Dark Roasted Creamy Peanut Butter

Yes, you know you should be eating natural peanut butter, but you still want it to taste as good as your childhood fave. This winner, made from only organic roasted peanuts and salt, won hearts when it was introduced in 2006. It's rich without the density and the coarseness of other natural brands.

TO BUY: \$5 at supermarkets.

BEST THERMOMETER

Taylor Compact Waterproof Digital Thermometer

A digital screen instantly and clearly displays the meat temperature to prevent overcooking. Pros love its needlelike probe, which leaves an almost invisible mark behind where inserted.

TO BUY: \$15, amazon.com.

Photographs by Jens Mortensen

WINNERS NEVER QUIT

BEST OLIVE OIL

California Olive Ranch Everyday Fresh California Extra Virgin
There's no beating the price and the quality of this all-American offering. A fantastic cooking oil, with a subtle flavor of apple and spice that complements everything from roasted vegetables to crusty bread. **TO BUY:** \$9 for 500 milliliters, at supermarkets.



BEST MEASURING CUP

Oxo Good Grips Angled Measuring Cup
On the market since 2003, this was the first measuring cup designed so that it could be read from above. Genius. **TO BUY:** \$5 for mini; \$7 for 1-cup: oxo.com.



BEST FIG BAR

Newman's Own Fat Free Fig Newmans
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FOOD



BEST ICE CREAM

Häagen-Dazs Vanilla
Made with five ingredients and denser than other ice creams, this classic hasn't changed in 55 years. Still rich and creamy, still great on pie, still a crowd favorite. **TO BUY:** \$5.80 for 16 ounces, at supermarkets.

BEST BUTTER

Kate's Creamery Butter
With its 100-year-old slow-churning process, this family farm has butter down pat. Buy unsalted for cooking and baking, salted for spreading on bread or toast. **TO BUY:** \$5 for 16 ounces, at supermarkets.

BEST HOT DOG

Applegate The Great Organic Uncured Beef Hot Dog
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BEST POPCORN

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That should be in *Real Simple*

THESE NEXT-GEN IDEAS, SUBMITTED BY READERS AND RS STAFFERS, PROVE THAT THERE'S A LOT MORE LIFE TO BE SIMPLIFIED.



1

DOGGIE DOOR WITH CLEANING CAPABILITY: AS THE DOG WALKS THROUGH, HE GETS THOROUGHLY BRUSHED. AND ANY DIRT AND FUR ARE VACUUMED UP SO THEY NEVER ENTER THE HOUSE.

K. W., via Facebook

2

An adhesive tub liner (like the filmy drawing surface of a Magic Slate toy) that you can pull up at the end of the week and toss instead of having to scrub the tub.

BETSY GOLDBERG,
RS home director

3

A FOOLPROOF BANG TRIMMER!
J. H., via Facebook



9

SOMETHING THAT REALLY ELIMINATED THE BAGS UNDER YOUR EYES—EVEN IF ONLY FOR THE DAY.

PAM DIMAIO,
via Facebook

8

K-Cup coffeemakers, built into the car dashboard and the shower.

CATHY BUTLER-REYDEL,
via Facebook

4

A smart pillow that massages your head and neck, plays white noise to help you fall asleep, and wakes you gently with cheerful sounds in the morning.

SARA JENSEN, via Facebook

7

A grocery-store produce bag that actually opens—easily—after you tear it off the roll. No more fumbling! Bonus points if it's biodegradable.

SARAH HUMPHREYS,
RS executive editor

5

Pants that repel pet hair.

SARAH BURROWS,
via Facebook

6

COMPANION APPLIANCE TO THE WASHER AND DRYER THAT FOLDS YOUR CLEAN CLOTHES WHEN LOADED.

STEPHANIE SISCO,
RS associate home editor



10

Adjustable-height heels. By 5 P.M., if you could just lower that four-inch stiletto to a more comfortable kitten, or maybe even make the shoes flat, you'd save yourself a lot of pain and money.

REBECCA DALY,
RS fashion market editor



Illustrations by
Peter Oumanski

ADVERTISEMENT

SPRING **AWAKENING**

Revive and nourish your skin for the upcoming season with tips from top lifestyle blogger **GRACE ATWOOD**.



FRESH-SQUEEZED CLEAN

"I am constantly on the go, and this usually means waking up with the sun and needing to be my absolute best for early meetings. Using **Olay Refreshing Citrus Scrub Cleanser** each morning wakes me right up and is almost better than a cup of coffee!"



SUNRISE SHINE

"Sun protection is important to practice all year, and **Olay Total Effects Anti-Aging Moisturizer** offers SPF 30 to transition seamlessly from winter to spring. It melts into my skin and builds a youthful, supple finish that keeps me feeling radiant."



BEAUTY IN A BLINK

"The skin under my eyes is so delicate that it requires special care. The **Olay Anti-Aging Eye Treatment** brightens and balances my skin tone; perfect because warmer months call for bolder eye shadows and pops of color."



GRACE ATWOOD

| thestripe.com |

The Stripe is a trendsetting lifestyle blog written by style maven **Grace Atwood**, who takes beauty and fashion seriously in stride. "In order to develop your own aesthetic, you need a healthy foundation to start off with," Grace says. "The winter can leave your skin dry and dull, so **exfoliation, SPF, and moisture** are key if you want to start the season off on the right foot."

"Warmer months are such an inspiration to me, from running in the park to shooting new looks outdoors," she explains. "My days are full, so **Olay Citrus Scrub Cleanser** wakes me right up, the **Eye Treatment** keeps me looking fresh, and I can trust the **Anti-Aging Moisturizer** to protect my skin no matter where my day takes me!"

“Renewed beauty is easily obtained with just a few easy steps!”
—Grace Atwood”



YOUR BEST BEAUTIFUL™

10 super-smart cleaning supplies

These shiny pennies go above and beyond the call of duty.

MR. CLEAN MAGIC ERASER* Dampen this small sponge and swipe. It's the quickest and easiest way to obliterate scuff marks on walls, stubborn grime in the tub, and even marker on smooth surfaces. **TO BUY:** \$4 for two, soap.com.

RAIN-X ORIGINAL GLASS TREATMENT Want a glass shower door that never gets scummy? Every three months, spritz it with this car-cleaning classic, which repels water spots. **TO BUY:** \$6, target.com.

E-CLOTH WINDOW PACK No need to use any cleaner with this machine-washable pair (a waffle-knit cloth to clean and a thin-weave one to dry and polish). Just moisten with water and wipe away. **TO BUY:** \$15, ecloth.com.

LYSOL DISINFECTING WIPES The ultimate easy-clean hybrid: potent cleaning solution and cloth in one. **TO BUY:** \$4.70, walmart.com.

ELECTROLUX ERGORAPIDO PLUS BRUSHROLL CLEAN* With a pop-out handheld vacuum, this stick model eliminates the trip back to the utility closet when you need something small to suck up corner crumbs. **TO BUY:** \$150, bestbuy.com.

DISINFECTANT SCRUBBING BUBBLES BATHROOM CLEANER An effortless fix for the most dreaded of cleaning tasks. Spray the foamy formula on the toilet, tub, shower, and sink and it lifts the dirt so you can quickly wipe instead of scouring. **TO BUY:** \$3, soap.com.

DR. BRONNER'S CASTILE LIQUID SOAP* Fill a bucket with ½ gallon of water and a tablespoon of this classic cleanser and you can use the solution throughout the house: mopping floors and wiping down countertops and most other surfaces. **TO BUY:** \$18, drbronner.com.

THE SKRAPR Move this spatula-like tool along a moistened glass cooktop to get the grime up fast without scratching the surface. **TO BUY:** \$10, bedbathandbeyond.com.

THE ABSORBER SYNTHETIC DRYING CHAMOIS It holds more moisture than cotton cloths. Use it to clean your car or your countertops and you won't waste time having to wring it out. **TO BUY:** \$16, amazon.com.

O-CEDAR EASYWRING SPIN MOP AND BUCKET SYSTEM A slotted wringer makes it easier (and neater) to squeeze out excess water when mopping hardwood floors. And the machine-washable microfiber mop head leaves you with fewer streaks and a quicker drying time. **TO BUY:** \$30, walmart.com.

*These products also appear on Real Simple's "Winners Never Quit" list (page 79).

15 GAME-CHANGING CLEANING SHORTCUTS

Guaranteed to make you feel happier, calmer, and more accomplished. Instantly.



1 Clean a room clockwise, top to bottom. All the dirt, dust, and debris will collect on the floor, where you can pick it up in one quick sweep.

2 Leave an extra set of supplies upstairs. You'll tackle rooms there faster (and more consistently).

3 Make dishwasher loading deliberate. Put all forks in one compartment, all knives in another, and all spoons in another. When it's time to restock the drawer, you get to skip the step of sorting.

4 Try this microwave-cleaning trick: Instead of laboring over hardened gunk, heat water and lemon juice in a large microwave-safe bowl for 3 minutes. Let stand for 5 minutes, then wipe the interior with a paper towel.

5 Drop everything for a spill. If you let a mess sit, it solidifies and takes up more time (and elbow grease) when you finally do clean it.

6 After getting out of the shower, give the glass door and sink a speedy wipe-down. You'll have less soap scum to deal with later.

7 Let disinfectant sit. This sounds counterintuitive as a shortcut, but when you wait 10 minutes after spritzing, wiping up grime is a cinch.

8 Stash extra bags at the bottom of your kitchen garbage can. With a clean supply at the ready, swapping in a new bag is less of a chore.

9 If lugging around a messy mop bucket is slowing you down, spritz a damp microfiber mop with an all-purpose cleaner instead.

10 Use a pillowcase to clean a ceiling fan. It will trap the dirt so you don't have to sweep the floor afterward. Spritz a water-and-vinegar solution on the case, then gently rub it over each blade, one by one, to dust.

11 Don't scrub the stovetop. It's faster to soak a cloth in warm, soapy water, lay it over the dirty spot for 10 minutes, then wipe clean.

12 To clean a lampshade fast, run a lint roller over the inner and outer surfaces, and use a hair dryer to blow dust out of the seams.

13 When you need to clear a surface before cleaning it, put all the objects on a tray instead of moving each piece out of the way singly.

14 When you sweep, mop, or vacuum, start in the corner farthest from the room's entrance and work your way out. You won't have to go back to get rid of foot marks or debris on a floor that you just cleaned.

15 After cleaning and drying blinds, swipe with a dryer sheet. The residue repels dust, so you can get away with cleaning less often.

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LOOK BACK,
I WILL JUST
LOOK
YOUNGER.”

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*Based on mass-market facial moisturizer and cleanser dollar sales for past 12 months ending June 2014.




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YOUR BEST BEAUTIFUL™

*IT IS NOT THE CRITIC
WHO COUNTS;*

*THE CREDIT BELONGS
TO THE MAN WHO IS
ACTUALLY IN THE ARENA,*

WHO STRIVES VALIANTLY;

*WHO ERRS, WHO COMES
SHORT AGAIN AND AGAIN;*

*WHO KNOWS
GREAT ENTHUSIASMS;*

*WHO SPENDS HIMSELF
IN A WORTHY CAUSE;*

*WHO AT THE BEST
KNOWS IN THE END*

*THE TRIUMPH OF
HIGH ACHIEVEMENT,*

AND WHO AT THE WORST,

*IF HE FAILS,
AT LEAST FAILS
WHILE DARING GREATLY.*



DARE GREATLY